

Australia's magazine of the performing arts September 1979 \$1.95

Theatre Australia



FRANK WILSON AND CAROLINE

TRAVELLING NORTH

FILM EXTRA



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Theatre Australia New Writing

Departmental

Mervyn Rutherford



The Theatre Australia New Writing plays appear October.

The national magazine of the performing arts

Theatre Australia



September 1979

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#COMMENT#

There are no more than a handful of our own first rate playwrights and this month sees world premieres of the work of two of them. David Williamson's *Travelling North* by Howard and Dorothy Hewett's *After From Ashes* comes by the National, Perth.

The worrisome thing is that despite the fortune that always awaits for promises by distinguished writers, neither play looks set to break any significant new ground (though let the people beware! Williamson is writing as brilliantly as ever but presently in mellow mood — with the best will in the world it find it hard to work up much of a rant over generic love affairs. Hewett is on my list, but even if the play is instantly given a world tour (and *Kevin Brooker* might well be advised to read the script of this one, or urge Michael Eddley, which on the spot, to go along it will only confirm to the rest a goodness which the commentators have always known).

Both writers are good friends and these remarks are made not to encourage or be hostile but to make a point arising out of the work of our rightly acclaimed best writers. (Immediate apparent is that the present offerings of both are much tamer than previous — and the same goes for those (compare *Marvellous Taverns* or *Melbourne Reef* with *Norm* and *Abner* and *Hibbard*

(compare the lack of content in *Mebe* with the scorch of *Marvellous Melbourne*).

The well known tactic of our *Fuchster* is to down any burning issue as an issue of boredom, the problem is that in a country a war not right through the nation's spirit. There are issues — a constant small crisis occurred for far too frequent crimes than are presently being perpetrated. It just seems that now the response is not to enter into animated debate — let alone take to the streets — but to greet everything with a yawn. (And the opposition itself looks on more bemusingly.)

A little white water can be seen here and there on the galliard itself, but nothing so large or coherent as a new wave. When the most exciting thing around is *The Boy's Own Merb* — one stage on from *Hamlet On Ice* — and even then is looked away as the top Kirk Gallery, things have reached a sorry pass. Without a strong alternative and/or across young theatre, the establishment stays on its beam, not its toes.

We are urged to "have a go — we can do it", a plea which only confirms the lethargy of a nation. Some attempt must be made to stand against the tide before we all directionally disappear down our own navels. (grin) And so to bed.

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COMEDY



“?QUOTES&QUERIES?”



Frank Wilson and Carol Raye in *Travelling North*. Photo Peter Holdstock

TRAVELLING NORTH

FRANK WILSON

"It is a story and also a study of human customs, which is what David does extremely well. It's a man in his early twenties who has done pretty well so far played off his life, has been a success on a flicker — depending pretty well on what you look at his character. I like to think he has been successful even though he's failed at various things — like he stood there once in a row as a committed candidate in a Thresh election. He meets this very attractive woman, played by Carol Raye, and they fall in love and have a liaison much in the climate of their situation, particularly here. I have a son who models it quite less because he hasn't spoken to me for 12 years, and I have a daughter who's very understanding, but also very aware of my faults, but she plays along with me without making the best. We're not getting married — so what's new. But her daughter, that's another level of fish. They really get into them because they can see their help, what, their general dependency, plus. Oh yes, they have a room in the house well furnished. They have everything for their convenience and comfort on the surface, but underneath when you get down to an under, that's really only someone to wipe their feet on. I'm not going to say any more."

(See article on page 14)

GIN GAME

WITH CRACKBULL, script.

"What are my feelings about Gin Game?"

Two people come together at a time of mental need because they are old because they are alone — even with many other surrounding

them. A device is needed to develop their relationship. It is a card game. Forman's exploration and growing understanding of the game is paralleled by the characters each in making about the other and finally about himself. It is not without you and always with an honest and an honest quite disarming honesty.

It is a play about old people but I feel the young, the middle aged and those most concerned, the old will eventually relate to — and indeed often is supremely entertaining."

PLAYWRIGHTS — TAKE NOTE

ELAINE LINDSAY, Senior Project Officer, Literature Board.

"The Literature Board of the Australian Council is now calling for poet applications from playwrights and theatre companies for assistance under the Board's playwright in residence scheme for 1980.

A playwright in residence is understood to be a playwright who is attached to a particular theatrical group for a specified period so that he/she can work on further script or scenes with a team and director.

Two different types of playwright in residence grants are offered: one for professional theatre companies for the employment of established playwrights and the other for TIE groups for the employment of newcomers, whose names and work may not be widely known.

In the past year the Board considered towards the salaries of two playwrights in residence grants usually being distributed on a 3:1 basis and ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 for periods of one to six months.

Guidelines and application forms are available from the Literature Board, P.O. Box 941, North Sydney, 2060. Applications on the appropriate forms must be received by the Board by the closing date of 30 September, 1979."

FISH WITH A BICYCLE

JOHN ANTHONY KING, assisted playwright in residence with Nimrod, sponsored by the Literature Board.

"Steven Berkoff dresses like a warring samurai and has a mole in the middle of his forehead that resembles a third eye. Ken Harker collects scraps in his works, and Tom Sneggs does for a fact, look like Black Jaguar. Tremendous information? Not if one happens to be a young, would-be playwright, by choice and acceptance, good because suddenly thrown into the chaotic company of the "heroes".

Accidents, in some respects a more descriptive of aberration, had me sent off pieces to the Nimrod. To wit, an appalling load of cobble's concerning the bushwanger David Moxon, his

life and times explained by about 300 characters in the course of some 95 scenes. Thanks but no thanks, your sincerity, John. Well. Or words to that crushing effect. A second piece, fairly somewhat better resulting in an interview with Mr. Bell. What a nice man, I thought, starting from the interview itself used in new plays. But were his intentions hidden? That, indeed, has the rub. But at least the interview got the piece flowing, to the point of acceptance in another moment of effort of spreading propositions. Life's very comfortable in an every time. Whereas an appointment to a resident playwright to any degree, is alone one of the reputation of the Nimrod, has a tendency to bring you back very quickly to earth. And you think things found the ground hard (the one actually — but one gathers that, that is very hard from a great height — Ed).

The worst thing that can happen to a new playwright is not to have his or her plays performed. The second worst is to have them used before an audience. There you see those words and all every defining and change suddenly spotlighted in those some genre of work left over, showing like a jewel on the wreckage? (Ignore it, it's the rubbish that words concern you — should it sweep if only in an act of sensation to show that and 'honesty'?). No one trying to cut yourself out before it isn't all that bad after all, I mean, if that will a heavily aroused eye make the words sound any better to an audience — even if they do sound the Shakespeare in your own case. And that is the great value to new writer of a season working with a theatre company. The notion of staging a play are such as they are director? options are readily available, actors on tap to discuss a role, technicians willing with expertise. And just as important, there is constant contact with his or her plays and writers. All of which not only stimulates but helps in breaking down the sense of isolation that, from observation, often makes a writer.

Ultimately however the play is the thing. Your baby's out in the hard cruel world and no one is going to pamper his defects. The word for it is surgery — usually emergency radical revision — so find a better role for an. Chances are the operation will not transform you into Chekov but it will might give you the most important thing yourself as a writer. Isolation gets you nowhere, involve yourself in a company — amateur, semi pro or professional, anything where the words can be heard. Don't sit up in your garage wondering how it all might sound on stage or worse still that say play a finished when you're typed up. Blackout — Fred Carter or whatever. There's no time of finally involved in listening to someone else's opinion — and even less involved in taking

Q & Q

school, if it's good advice. After all, how important is your eye when it comes to looking at your own work — and wouldn't you just love to see the original draft of *Blissful*? It's a maniacal life in the performing arts. A playwright without a theatre, no playwright a very odd piece of modern graffiti, is like a fish without a bicycle. And now, conversely, I haven't sold. All the same, if angst could kill I can think of a few students who'll be pushing up daisies right now..."

PINTER ON PINTER

ANDREW BARCLAY, Director, Radio Players.

"I must admit I was sceptical when someone asked to see me about *The Homecoming* in March and said he was a close friend of Pinter's — but he really was and when he came to London, he came again and saw *The Birthday Party* and *Old Times* and talked a lot about Pinter. Harold Pinter is fast writer to me; after this."

"I am very impressed by the range of material contained in the programme and delighted that this venture has been so successful. An old friend of mine, who lives in Sydney was passing through London the other day and told me that he thought the standard of your productions was very high indeed. A pity I can't see them myself!"

The final result was a great success and a great to know a man thought of so well."

ADELAIDE NEW WAVE FESTIVAL

STEPHEN PARTINGTON, Co-ordinator, Australian Drama Festival.

"*The Formed* the first of its kind held here, is, appropriately in the year of the 150th anniversary of the first play about Australia written from first hand experience."

Also appropriately it is to be held in Adelaide which is now widely held to be the centre of Australian playwrighting activity, producing Steve J Spross, Kevin Ross, David Allen and Bob George in the past few years.

It felt that it is important that the new wave of writers which started ten years ago in Sydney and Melbourne with Hilbert, Roderick, Williamson and Buzzo is kept flowing and that a drama festival focusing exclusively on Australian work should do this.

Several efforts are being made to include Greek, Australian, Indo-Australian and women's theatre, and possibly film, radio and television also.

The festival is intended as hearing from any performance and playwrighting wishing to present a play, read or perform their own or other Australian shows. Any groups or performers interested in taking part should contact me at the office of the Australian Drama Festival.

Adelaide College of Arts and Education, Rundle Avenue, Adelaide. Phone 213 8386 or 213 8418."

BEYOND CRITICISM

RON ELISHA

"*The Day After*, which is being performed by the NTC in September, is a play which I did, in fact, feel duty bound to write. In it I have passed comment on the behaviour of what I see as misbehaviour of Jews in the Diaspora.

The truth is, however, of this comment, it is of course a matter of opinion. Truth always is. That there was a need of such a comment to be made remains a matter of contention. For me such a need arose out of the fact that Jews, as a group, have been a people beyond 'inferred' criticism ever since the Nazi Holocaust. It is my belief that no people — no matter who they are — at what they have suffered — should ever be beyond criticism.

Intimacy from criticism is, after all, the stuff of which Holocausts are born."

A WONDERFUL FUNNY NIGHT

JOHN TASKER, Director.

"It is a coincidence that a very happy one, that the two most popular Australian plays from the first half of the century have appeared within weeks of each other at Sydney. On Our Selection 1912, at Jane Street, and from 11 August, *Slavie* at the New Theatre. Both plays, despite the 35 years between them, have among ourselves fit, mixed with the great comedy, both plays share an accurate picture of the times and the characters' ability to cope and survive."

Slavie began was premiered in 1948 at the Independent Theatre. Despite its great success there it has only had one production since, in 1962. For most Australian theatregoers it is only a name, though for those who saw it in 48 or 62 it is a legend — a wonderful, funny night at the theatre in a New Frank Harris moment."

Slavie begins is about Australian diggers in 1844 stationed at an Outback Depot in the NT. The story line is very slight, *Somerset Maugham* thought he was writing possibly a documentary but concentrating on characterisation and the characters' relationships to each other. It is in my opinion the first modern Australian play, written eight years before *Somerset of the Swanston Road*."

CALL ME MADAM

VERA BURSILL, Soap Shop Co-ordinator.

"I'm one of the odd school so I don't like being called Ma so I asked the Arts Council to call me Madam — and they did."

The Arts Council are behind the soap shop

project. I was with J.C. Williamson's for about a quarter of a century, in national positions mainly, but just before they folded I was in charge of licensing amateur networks of my *Amateur, Gilbert, Wells Dells* — all of the cases that the schools or amateur companies wanted to do, so of course I had contacts all over the country.

When JCW's folded the Arts Council came round and would I like to carry on contact and set up a soap shop for I wrote to all the amateur people that I knew and also told them on the Arts Council list, and from the information that they gave me I made up a diary for NSW of who was doing what.

Thus we have a no-affiliated body of amateur theatres and therefore the people in Banks may not know that the people in Albany, say, are just about to do, or have done the same play. But now when they get the diary they can see who else is doing the same sort of thing — or, maybe, that way they will be able to swap or exchange ideas and things I am just the co-ordinator. I could have moved all Australia but the Arts Council only deal with NSW and they pay and print and circulate the diary over the internet. It is just NSW.

This has only just begun. I think I first started at the end of last year just before Christmas. I've just got my second newsletter out and so far I have had about a dozen from people, particularly with queries and orders. I've also been to a meeting in Sydney where some of the companies were talking about sets, or maybe if people get together something can be done there too. I hope this will be a means of ensuring that amateurs are aware of other amateur performances.

I've wrapped it this as an internet and it is just the thing for me about JCW's — Vera Banks Soap Shop Co-ordinator, 18 Newman Street, Randwick, 2031. Tel: 023 390 6622."

EARTHWATCH

NANCY HAYES, Chernobyl apter.

"Each week, apart from all the information given in the programme, we shall have a guest. The programme on the whole is done as an information body with film clips etc., and each segment has a subject chosen for instance Zoon, or Pollution, or Colonial History, or Health and Risks."

I have the children as the programme for about 4 hours for cultural. And at the weekends they were putted mostly for their personality so not all of them are singers and dancers — some are just decent little personalities. I have to work with those who don't dance as well as those who do, so in fact I photograph the group."

Earthwatch is on a Monday at 9 pm on ABC and national. It will run for about 13 weeks and it includes an earthwatchers' club so that the children watching can write in and share their experiences with other people."

Ray Stanley's

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS

Following the spate of Dracula attractions we are now likely to have a Sweeney Todd trend, triggered by the new Southsides musical? Already in the US a 1936 British novel, *Sweeney Todd: The Demonically Barbed Haircut of Fleet Street*, is being staged.

Marwan from the Chichester Festival Company could be making a return visit to these shores. I hope that talk about Robert Morley starring here in *The Old Country* is incorrect. People have come to look upon him as a "funny" man and might have difficulty in accepting him as a serious role. And surely that remark can't be true about the Trust actually emboldening one of our rebuffed companies for rights in a certain American play?

Tom Wernon Christie in *The Saltwater* was recently on the Victorian Music Theatre's annual production *And, White & Snapper* at Melbourne's Arden. It was full circle for that Peter Bence musical, which started life 10 years ago as *It Happened in Yugoslavia* at the same venue, then known as the Yvanka. An ambition of the State Theatre Company of SA is to stage a female version of Beckett's *Waiting For Godot* with Patricia Kennedy and Ruth Cracknell.

Remember Charles West, who on several occasions played the lead here in productions of *Men of La Mancha*? Well, he has now taken over the role of Dinky Warbucks from Stratford Johns in the London production of *Annie*. Wonder if a Melbourne management will take up George Whaley's highly rated production of *On the Veranda*. Will be a shame if it's not seen

in the Victorian capital. There's whisper of a musical version of *Seven Little Australians*.

Story going around London that the night before last on film director Walter Saville died, a friend phoned and asked what he thought of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister. Chancing, Saville said "Well, when I'm watching her on TV, I can't help thinking that it's really Anne Boleyn playing the part" Which could have been Saville's last words. Is it true Harry M Miller is planning to go back onto the live theatre scene? Does it need him?

Broadway critic Clive Barnes apparently has been caused from that new magazine he was founding — *American Stage*. Now it will be edited by Leonard Harris of WCBS-TV Network. And the *New York Times* Richard Evans has been replaced by — Walter Kerr? — Geoff Hootin, a drama graduate of Rensselaer College, has been awarded a grant from the Australian Council to mount a production of the Alfred Jarry play *Ubu* — *The King* running for four weeks from September 12 at Melbourne's Universal.

Here Ray Livermore is going to make his first trip to New York — and will be the house guest of Hal Prince. His next one even show his premiere in Melbourne will be *Son of Betty*, and after that he apparently intends to concentrate upon Gilbert and Sullivan. And by the time this column is published it will probably be known whether John Deodato secured his work permit from English Equity to play the male lead in the English revival of *Okla!oma!*

During the rehearsals for *The Arab* the MTC staged a luncheon where crates were able to meet its director. Peter James from England Peier told me how successful his production of the American musical *Chicago* is in London. Originally presented at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre, it subsequently transferred. There is a possibility next year Peter will direct an Australian commercial production of it. Supposed to him that Nancye Hayes would again a magnet for the role Greer Garson created on Broadway.

Hot rumours that Australia could be seeing Katherine Hepburn on stage next year in *The Love Is Winner* danced by Robert Hepburn. And another rumour around that Suzanne

Shale could be joining forces with Howard Keel for a musical presentation. How that speculation of the production of *Erin* here is likely to be around those quarters of a million dollars, with an unknown and one of those promising newcomers in *A Chorus Line* during the late rise.

Seeing whispers that there will be no Shakespeare production from Fremantle next year, but around the company will be *Twelve Curses*. Seems that Fremantle are likely to do an adaptation *The Ghosts of Anzkyria* plus *Armistice*, *Frags* or *Wings* to be directed by John Bell and Ken Barker. Former will be translated by poet Les Murray and later by Hugo McCulloch. The non-professional Federal Theatre Company changing its production of Scottsboro's *Follies* is an Australian premiere. It's being staged at the Civic Theatre in Camberwell, Victoria, 7-13 September, with choreography by Rennie Armit.

The Trust's Jeff Kowell and John Little set off to New York and Washington in October in Britain tour details are, for next year's season of Australia by The Dance Theatre of Harlem and The Acting Company from New York. Something Deborah Kerr and Patricia Kennedy both in the cast of *The Day After the Day* have in common the role of Anna Malagol in *The Chalk Garden*. The former was in the film version, the latter in the Australian New Zealand tour.

Who is the King of the TV Commercial? Jonathan Hardy must surely qualify for the title. He tells me that he has done 40 already and has 15 more lined up for the next year. Some interesting businessmen who will be touring the country in the near future include the legendary Francis Faye (won't the fame in the film *Phony* Belyth, Poplin Dellar, Earl Ivan, Truss Lopez, Frank Field, John Anthony and Jerry Lot Lanes.

During a performance of *The King and I* in London's Palladium Virginia McKenna (playing Anna) threw her hairbrush on the bed, but a fell off and rolled down the corridor, remaining there during the rest scene when Yul Brynner entered and snatched over it. Picking it up Brynner smiled and it tilted "I don't think I'll be needing that".



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LETTERS

Dear Sir,

While I commend *Theatre Australia* for the "scoop" on Youth and Children's Theatre (July 1978), I think it is unfortunate that Aedyn Roddy's article on Theatre in Education did not appear to have been written in the Year of the Child. The only two of our productions mentioned *Guinea and Gum and Gum* finished their runs in May 1978.

There was no reference made to what we regard as our far more significant achievement — our own plays *Red Earth* and *The Real Mr J* and our production of *Kalbarri*, the play we commissioned from Aboriginal writer Jack Davis. *Kalbarri*, incidentally, has never been reviewed in *Theatre Australia* despite the enormous success of its public performances. In the event perhaps being held over for another special on "Current Trends in Black Theatre" to appear in 1980?

THE is certainly not in a more state state than any other form of theatre, and an article written without up-to-date information is bound to be misleading. May I suggest that in future you encourage your reviewers to accept invitations to see Children's Theatre and THE productions, and to review them just as they would any other professional performance.

Yours sincerely,
Michael Talbot,
The Director,
National Theatre, Perth.

Mr Roddy points out that his article was a Survey of Theatre in Education and not intended as a state by state review of TIE activities.

— Ed

Dear Sir,

I wonder if I may follow up my late letter with another detailing further information conducted by some theatre companies?

It seems that not only do theatre companies have a deplorable habit of losing new scripts, but many refuse to pay royalties to the authors of the plays they do produce.

Betty Roland, whose play *A Touch Of Silk* is suddenly a major property, has received very little in the way of royalties. First, a company working in association with a State Arts Council requested permission to produce *A Touch Of Silk*, and they asked her for recently returned reviews. They promised to get in touch with her regarding royalties.

But not a word has she heard from the company that produced her play over a season of 15 performances. The company contacted the state company, and the State Arts Council have all ignored her letters. It is revealed that this particular company prefer mail in paying full publicity rates to directors, and personally to

actors and actresses, according to what it said about itself in the May issue of *Theatre Australia*. Presumably living Australian writers are not to be taken into account.

Second, Betty received a letter from a student of a drama department of a university, "imagining in Drama, engaged in an Australian Playwrights course", asking for a copy of the latest version of *A Touch Of Silk*. The play, Betty was advised, was to be "workshopped" but not at the stage for public performance.

Betty says that she sent a synopsis of the revised version which has neither been acknowledged nor returned like her brand of her play being produced at several other places recently but has been unable to do anything about it.

I know the sort of thing is quite common in Australia, perhaps it has something to do with our convoluted background. Writers may care to relate their experiences at the earliest hands of the "vagans and vagabonds engaged in this most unhelpful world".

Yours sincerely,
Moore Miller,
Edinburgh, Va.

Dear Sir,

In an effort to be concise the "handicapped" Mr Price has unfortunately glossed over several factors contributing to the last office failure of David Allen's *Good Wife Marj*. The situation was not as simple to be straight as you say.

I refer to his accusation that "the Perth production of *Windy* was a genuine pay to director and theatre manager alike they didn't have their act together at all".

Both Colin McGill and I considered our duties as Director and Administrator in mid January. Colin had the disadvantage of having to select and cast a programme of plays for the next six months within four months of his arrival in Perth, then plunge unannounced into the consecutive direction of three of them. *Windy* mentioned rehearsal on February 15 and opened on March 14.

I was somewhat better placed by being a recently returned West Australian who knew the local scene a little more. But greater knowledge was little use in publicity terms with the media who not unreasonably focused their attention on the much more immediate Festival of Perth, rather than small promoting a production at a theatre which appeared all year round anyway. Publicity angles — new Australian play, new actor, new director, new management, good line, human interest about a famous film star etc. — cut little or with a media which was up to its eyeballs in the performing arts for a month and then wanted to

try low and marginal.

Both of us also discovered before our appointments that we had inherited a debt of some \$30-400, all of it incurred during the previous two years. This has affected our approach to 1979's programmes and we make no apology for it.

I dispute the claim that I was "more concerned with last year's debt than coming up with a good publicity angle". We deny the contention that we saw the production as merely as Mr Price claims.

Finally listed in the last office because theatre goers had just spent a lot of money on Festival tickets and were either reducing their expenditure or putting their list up to recover from their recent cultural phantoms. It opened a week after the Festival but was unable to carry over any publicity. By contrast the Playhouse, with a star — Warren Mitchell — opened in the last week of the Festival and attracted a lot of publicity in its advertising to note that the Playhouse production of *Death of a Salesman* relied exclusively on school parties to make up its audience, in much of the audience who went to see *Salesman* did so for reasons other than being entertained. The main reason for programming *Windy* in March was to bring in audiences who wanted to get over the intellectual lumps the Festival provided.

And finally, sadly, despite the two favourable reviews of his work quoted by Mr Price, his performance in the central role of Sam Lovell failed to impress many of those who did see the show — and *Windy* audience are strongly influenced by word of mouth reports.

Yours sincerely,
John Newby,
Administration,

Hale in the Wall Theatre, Perth

Dear Sir,

Pub theatre has existed in Sydney since mid 1975, when Bryan Brown and others estimated 200 odd people into the recently closed troupe at the White Horse Hotel to witness the performance of a co-operative of professional actors in a revue entitled *PV's on TV*.

It is now mid 1978 and the White Horse troupe is numbered with two (billion) tales and a pile too. Pub theatre no longer exists there.

But pub theatre exists.

The Civic Hotel housed one production early last year but eventually went where the money was and is now a leading punk rock venue.

But pub theatre exists.

In October 1978 I directed a co-operative of professional actors in *The Over the Rainbow Show* which opened the Karrihill Hotel in a

Continued on page 10

SPOTLIGHT

One of America's top directors is here for the Opera House World Theatre season. Robert Lewis' Long Journey to O'Neil

A TA Interview

One of America's top directors is here for the Opera House World Theatre season. *Robert Lewis*, most in Australia to direct *Long Day's Journey Into Night* — the Ensemble's contribution to the Sydney Theatre Company's World Theatre Series — has come at the behest of Haydn Gordon who, unable to direct a play because of his involvement in *Amie*, thought at least to take his place the man who had directed him in *Breakdown* in 1987.

Lewis has not been in Australia before, and discussed with Haydn Gordon at some length the play that would be most suitable for him to do. *Long Day's Journey* finally seemed most representative of America because "it was by our best playwright, and I think his best play — and I haven't directed it before." He wanted to see the play as early as possible — certainly before his arrival — so as not to lose rehearsal time, and so that good actors would not be otherwise engaged, but not knowing the country, or the actors were a problem. Haydn talked at length on the idea of long-distance auditions by video tape.

"He videotaped about 4 or 5 candidates for each part and did really marvellous tests because he knows me and knows exactly the sorts of things I ask them to do if I were there. He just had them sitting at a table and doing some very simple things, and not covering themselves with a lot of acting, which can fool you as auditions. If he thought they weren't responding well he'd stop into the arena and give some direction and that was good for me because it allowed me to see how they took direction and what difference there was, if any, after he spoke."

The results of the long-distance auditions went Patricia Cusack to play the mother, with Kevin Myles in the father, then read a *Shakespeare* and *Edward Myles* will play the O'Neil just of Edmund Tyrone. But Phyllis has been cast in *Amie*, after auditioning Lewis on tape in a place where which means place it to say, where he played an unimpaired school teacher — very close to the character of the other brother. I thought I'd just have a quick look at it, but it was so good I watched the whole thing — it lasted an hour. My comment to Haydn was great, huh?"

Even the set and costume design had finished before Robert Lewis arrived. York Toss, having worked on the Drama Theatre



Robert Lewis
Peter Bracco/Globe

before, knew the man and the theatre, he shared with me and costume designer which were mailed to Lewis and checked, and finally sent photographs of the set model, and so again when I got here there were no surprises. So all we have to do now is do it."

There are five weeks for rehearsal — a week longer than he would take in the States, but a week out of the time because of time he spent in America (they rehearse for more hours each day). For the first readings Lewis tries to keep his actors from "using too much so they don't trip at with music, kind of exercises — the trials behind that can only come later. First I want them to talk, talk and learn and explore the material of the text." But he doesn't apply any set method to his rehearsal, but of all "the method of the Actors Studio he co-founded." "I don't apply anybody's method to any rehearsal — they do it by themselves. I study everything, I'll read from anybody, but I'm not a proponent of anyone except Bette Lewis. It's an amalgam of people, hopefully all coming out as my own thing. We're all influenced by someone and I've seen I've been, but not by Stanislavski more than others."

As the play itself, Robert Lewis is making a slightly shorter journey to the audience. He is cutting one of the three intervals, saving half an hour to a minute and playing it in two acts rather than three. He has also done some judicious pruning, but he's carefully hard to cut because you can't really destroy — the reputation is

part of its nature and if you cut it you ruin it, but I have taken out some of the extraneous at the end. It will seem long or short depending on the performance, length is a relative thing, we can be certain as 10 minutes it's boring, or not at all."

To elicit the right performance, Lewis looks to be helped by having been a actor himself, he knows what is encouraging and what hinders from a director. Directors who have? Asked the Tyrone Gordon may not be good control, suggestive as a director who did not, but some directors "don't understand why, what they tell us about to do something, they don't just go and do it."

"Total acting" — a phrase which comes up in his book *Acting* — or *Method* — is the objective by which Robert Lewis means "the complete state which then has found its complete artistic manifestation." The director is present, he looks, by actors who find a world of characterisation within themselves but with the discipline to express it appropriately within the language of the play and the other. Stanislavski was not, and by the approach those who disdain the beauty of the language without the true meaning, but one can have both. "Lawrence Olivier was a total actor in his peak, as was Michael Chekhov, grandson of Anton, by was absolutely learning made, with always such a passionate sense of life, but always completely controlled outside."

Lewis has taught acting at universities and colleges concurrently with his theatrical career and claims that his best students are the ones who most gratefully forget everything he has taught them — that means that a so-called student, if you forget it then it's a pass. His students have included such notables as Martin Doonan — apparently a defuncted, if anything light comic actor, and contemporary Cibo, both in one class in the first and only just he taught at the Actors Studio, before falling out with his co-founder Kazan.

With the previous fashion for so-called Brechtian techniques and staging, as opposed to the falling off of naturalism, Lewis, having met Brecht, repudiates any real difference in acting styles. "I saw the Berliner Ensemble in *Children of Men*, *The Mother and Arthur*, and the acting was the same as great acting anywhere. It's a difference of degree only. There's no lack of feeling, they just make environmental choices. But Brecht had interesting theories, but when he directed he just wanted good stories told."

Another Carlton collective? — but this one two years old and off to Hoopla.

Everyman's Theatre Collective

Margaret McClusky

In the wake of *La Marna* and the *Three Flyers* — almost long enough ago now to require the putting on of a comedy vest and tie — we've evolved these hybrid "community" and "ensemble" theatre collective/democratic groups. Unfortunately the "new" theatre became befuddled by too many people with plenty of enthusiasm, a modicum of talent and an insatiable ego. Theatre camps were organised to guide them here and there. Misconceptions were and hence themselves for an evening at a dingy little factory surrounding with the young audience.

Now the notion of yet another collective to take your money and make you work your weary hand of Carlton be of good faith. Everyman's embodies the best of Riverside theatre with some old-fashioned values. Such as talent. Such as people. A writer and director with flair. A company of actors who believe in their work — that there is more to theatre than thinking up a few boards. More is a theatre group than can be two thirty girls minutes of one or two rough-on plays.

After two years Everyman's Collective is still alive, well and looking for an audience? It has a long head hair, and the picture of the long work that like water, isn't letting up. A glacial look comes into the Collective's eye when you ask about publicity. Publicity? They feel it's what they really need to get going and so all they want to do is

A suspicious optimism perhaps? The suspicion that makes Everyman's something of a paragon is elusive. You look around its polished interiors and wonder what it is that has kept them together. Dennis Rob Chase might have — and he — the answer. His low made-over frame and two very expensive hand numbers. His off to New Zealand soon to play with Brian McNeil, writer of *The Two Flyers*, the latest Everyman's production. And

there's another New Zealand connection. Approaches are being made to Auckland's Theatre Company about a production of *The Spelling Family Album* (Reveries, TA, Nov 1978).

The Spelling Family Album is Everyman's group card. They first produced *Chorus* in Great South Theatre in 1977 and followed by Colin Ryan's *Polish Girl* Downstairs in the Playbox. *Polish Girl* was some critical acclaim but the Playbox had little room to fly as that didn't leave the theatre going public, wrote The Collective was almost as anonymous as any other small-scale theatre group.

Then came *Elster* and *The Spelling Family Album*. Rob Chase and playwright Colin Ryan are sharing about family, sickness, and life in the Downstairs where Chase (married) sits told to his grandmother by an elderly female companion in hospital in 1939. Colin Ryan burst off with *Elster* and it was performed at the Guild Theatre, University of Melbourne. Told to be an elderly companion as so much to hold a play on. Not so grandiose, some say with the Thompsons in place. In fact it all sounds a little tedious, and you see *Elster* and *The Spelling Family Album*.

Elster has money — is the case of 1939. It's every theatre group operating on a slender budget that would have been in Everyman's produced and put. *Elster* on at La Marna. While La Marna was the place to put on a play if you're looking for big box office, it also has been on OTTO Record Street.

The La Marna season was more successful. Colin Ryan went off and wrote another play *Forget Me Not* made some changes to *Elster* and indeed they went on at La Marna in October.

Elster is an unusual play. It has the pattern of last Victorian without closing (mis)deeds. And it works. *Forget Me Not* the last part shows members and neighbours of the Spelling/Chase family. It is a little light fluffy, and perhaps throwing the middle class grandeur going about their tales of de-corous business. And to set the stage for *Elster* but focus on the thoughts of a reputed monster.

It was a success — of sorts. It needed more. Critics took off their glasses of headless sheep and noticed. Determined to write while the pot was somewhat hot but a number of theatres and concert halls were made. The ABC was approached about a TV film and a radio play. An application was made to the Australian Film Commission for stage development funds. Colin is about writing a treatment. The Monkeys for got. Arts from Broadway — money for a payment

per of \$25, to take it to Perth to the Adelaide Festival. Approaches were made to the Hoopla Foundation. Perhaps if the plays were presented at the Playbox they would get some recognition? But publicity? No. But it would help.

Anne Gifford looks bored. She has been appearing for six months. With no other work of their own, the Collective must rely on an established theatre to take the play — and then — as she suggests that this is one of the great drawbacks of SFA. A success at Perth might open up the opportunity of putting a new three person. But it is the Collective's play and they want to perform it themselves. It is an understandable but unproductive ambition.

But there is the possibility of a being performed in New Zealand. And the possibility of the town the film. The machinery of bureaucracy, at this

Few people know of their existence. Most of those who do regard them as a small amateur company. Small they are. Amateur they're not. All are members of Equity. All have a sound theatre background. MIDA, St Martin's Theatre School, Melbourne State College. But those members would be hard enough without the camera work that all look to the Collective.

They look to one. Peter Page, an art costume designer, leads them in their use of the film. He chats about the wonderful "object" he has found which will make the set unique. Rob Chase, listed against the window talks of *The Two Flyers* (think of Kenneth Morehead Middleton Murry, D.H. Lawrence, Ben Focillon looking remarkably like Karl Maford, a member of a medium. He offers some pointed suggestions for coming rehearsal space. And a work on another plan of action for the Playbox campaign.

Anita Mical, Jo Anne Mason, Shirley Gearing, Jenny Sedden and Greg Brown, as, discuss about the ethics of the Collective. There are other members about. Colin Ryan is mentioned again. "What a lot!" The story another member playwright is something of a rebel. Probably to have a strong screenplay for SFA.

The energy and enthusiasm of the Collective is palpable. The next theatre program, scripting and polished acting of *Everyman* are a refreshing contribution to the stretched-out links of "alternative" theatre. STOP PRESS: Billed as "a superbly crafted piece of Edwardian Australia" by Hoopla Theatre, the *Spelling Family Album* opens on 19 September 1979, Upstairs at the Playbox, Melbourne. The excellent female cast from the La Marna season returns unchanged. The all new fully costumed stage comes complete.



Karl Focillon, Anne Gifford, Tony Myers and Anne Wright rehearsing *The Two Flyers*. Photo: Joseph Davidson.

Rob George talks of the long road to the MTC and Edinburgh Festival.

The Writer Behind Errol Flynn

TA Interview

It was while I was teaching that I wrote a short play — and it won first prize at a drama festival in Melbourne! It accepted the lot — bad actors, bad scenes, best director, best play. *Prongs* of course is very popular still and keeps turning up on festivals. I was at a party one day and I got around one lady came up to me and said 'I had a few plays that they could do and I said "Well I've one called *Prongs*", and she said "Oh we've just done that!"

Actually I suppose really I first started writing scripts with Steve Spear — we spent about three years in a writing partnership and even tried a play together. I think it was called *The Last Men Left On Earth*, but neither of us could agree on it so it is still unfinished somewhere in my filing cabinet. After that came Steve's *Snaf* in Adelaide in 1973 and then came in Tasmania and a TV series with the ABC.

It was then that I started writing *Las* which was really my first full length play. But this is all about the time that the Circle Theatre Company was formed. Circle went really well. We formed this company to do three short plays — all about — Bruce's *Playhouse Cafe*, Jerry's *Old Circle* and my *Prongs*. The group had quite a bit of success, and at the end of 1973 when we were all in Tasmania, we decided to quit our jobs and go professional. We did a season tour at South Australia with four comedies, a *Pygmalion* drama, a new short play of mine *Paul Reed*, *Comedy's Best Projects* and a school play. That went really well. We worked out of a small house in Melbourne and I carried on South Australia and toured round the little country towns where they don't usually go any theatre.

Country touring is interesting because if you are known in the district you get all the people you talk to in the pub and the shops along the shoulders and the glassiers and the builders, and they tell you the people that it was written for and we wanted to play in. You know it really is interesting because if you go on an Arts Council tour you often go to get all the distant writers and the doctor's wives and the ladies who've finished with basketball and are trying drama, and it is so interesting. Sometimes I suspect some of the classical performances in opera and ballet are produced into the upper classes, if you can sit through them you're of New Circle was playing to ordinary people and they laughed as if both when we were saying and the same reason as it was ironic.

After that came Melbourne where we rehearsed our production of *Jack Harkness* at the *Los Dorey Show* during the day and did my *Las* on nights to keep on going. *Well The Los Dorey Show* got terrible press but we were broke. We

put *Las* on at the Sables in Sydney in October '75 and then of course there was Bruce's *Young Abe* and a country tour afterwards. But the country tour was a disaster. It was an Arts Council thing and I don't think there was any proper publicity. No people just didn't know what it was all about. Anyhow we left we had to do something but in order to keep going.

Well our next season *Las* would have gone really well if we had had a star! As it was we played with a junior Peter McKinnon, who had a lot of songs he had written for a group in Adelaide and Tony Souda who was a choreographer and, since that was to be a chore event, we added a full rock band and then a theatre and an Arts Council grant. It was terrific — the show was big and noisy, and it really worked and we had a great lot from people out of the shape of Mount Kelly, and the ending — the ending was spectacular — there was this great splash made of palm tree leaves which came down out of the flies and carried our hero away — it really got people out of their minds — absolutely. But the critics came down hard on us, none even mentioned the music or the set, or the ending, and that was Circle's last production.

Well afterwards I went to Sydney and did some writing for Gary McDonald and then Steve and I worked out a plan for a short *Black Widows* *Final Rule* about a country and western singer touring the back blocks — a mix of Slim Dusty and Smokey Dawson — in fact it was really about Circle and touring! And we got enough money to complete that. And then — with that money as up to *Errol Flynn's Great Big Adventure Book for Boys*.

Errol opened in December 1977 at the Shadrach Theatre, produced by the Stage Company. That week it opened I was Helen in the premier production of *Three Men Go Down* by Steve J. Spear. After *Errol* the Stage Company's next production, which was for the 1978 Festival was my *Las* *Three Angels* which had originally been commissioned by the SATC but not produced.

Since then? Well I have completed the screen play of *Blazy Walker* and that unfortunately is still a bit. I also wrote a couple of short plays *Pumpkin* and *The Swamp* which were read by the Stage Company but not rehearsed and I haven't had the impetus to do that. Similarly at weekends was a TV pilot called *Cab & Co* written with Dave Morgan, but somewhere during 1978 I did write a couple of TV scripts for the ABC. Education and a short film for the SATC.

It was towards the end of last year that I found that the MTC was planning to do *Errol*. My confidence received a considerable boost. I had spent an afternoon getting drunk with Bruce



Rob George

Myself several times for years (20-25) — in 1976 Bruce was quite optimistic, but I feared he was just being kind. Also, as time dragged on, it became increasingly depressing, but for once the regular notes did not arrive.

Also towards the end of the year I was commissioned by the State Theatre Company to write a play for the MTC season. Out of that, and after a bit of work, came *Goodbye* which was performed during the Circle One Festival this year. It proved a big hit in Port Augusta but was not so successful in Adelaide. Perhaps I should take the hint!

1979 began with a six week stint in Midland directing *Let's Hear About the Radio* *Play*. The play was produced for the Melbourne Festival Drama Competition. I was delighted with the standard of the amateur cast. Barry Shephard the lead, won the Best Actor award — but I don't think the adjudicator was impressed with my directing — another hint!

The last few months I have been mainly involved with *Errol* again. First was a workshop period of one week with the MTC during which time I got quite a lot of ideas for revision and additions which I then spent a couple of months agonising over. The revision has taken longer than the original script! I have also been very busy arranging a group of local writers to take the play to this year's Edinburgh Festival. We leave for Europe in a fortnight's time. I am producing, directing and acting in it. So currently I have two productions of one play in rehearsal and also *Let's Hear About* being produced in Melbourne.

Is that enough? I have in complete another screenplay for the SATC before I leave for Edinburgh?

The future? More TV work, not the musical — also a play — my oldies? And an idea for a TV series.

After their recent season at the Stables Theatre JOHN SMYTHE interviews ...

Buttercup and Gladys

I make no claim for objectivity here. As an actor I feel the work I have done with Heather and Jan in music and clowning workshops has been invaluable. These clown performance work Gladys and Gladys. Heather in Buttercup has, for me, rediscovered true comedy and politics in a commercial, slick, television-dominated world. Clowning, from Shakespeare's fools, through Chaplin and Keston to Norman Macdonald involves an essentially honest, unadorned, children's intuitive creative process which is the real essence of all "playmaking". That is why I feel what Jan and Heather have to offer is of fundamental importance to our theatrical community.

Their company *Clowne* is currently based at Playbox House in Speldhurst. That's where we talked, over a cigarette and coffee, at the walls of their latest Buttercup and Gladys clown show for adults *Ready For Me?*

JOHN: How did Gladys and Buttercup evolve?

JAN: Finding your clown is a process of self-discovery. For me it happened over a period of about two years, while I was at the EFL school in London. I began to "personify" clowning as part of the course because it provided a parallel for their philosophy about acting. Once Gladys had become a thing in her own right I wanted to go further with her as a clown in performance. There is always room to explore. As you change so does your clown.

HEATHER: I studied at the Lecoq school in

Paris where the emphasis is on a very physical form of theatre. I'd been living in France for some years when I came to do it. I went through a crisis of identity. It wasn't until I came back here and worked with Jan that I found Buttercup accepted the way Australian and learned to laugh about a "Your clown is now really linked to your job and being". **JAN:** It's a bit like when women try to be male clowns, they're not being themselves.

HEATHER: The mistake, Charlie Chaplin thought can apply to men as well. Then there's the female clown clown syndrome. Looking back the original role of the clown has been lost. He was often an expression of the weakness in humanity.

JAN: To many people in Australia still think it's just painting your face and juggling and doing tricks. It goes much deeper than that.

HEATHER: It's more to do with what you can't do than what you can do.

JOHN: Do you find audiences less responsive and engaged to your clowns?

JAN: Very much so, though some "brandy" theatre people expect "highness" and "richness" — devices which are so often used to cover a lack of feeling. But the main aim of our workshop is to explore the "mystery of feeling" so the goal in performance has to be natural, not theatrical. Because clowning is about real life, childhood experience, ordinary people relate to it instinctively.

JOHN: Your material in "Ready For Me?" could be called political, a satirical exploration of women's experience under various social pressures. And yet clown for their very nature cannot be politically active or defiant.

HEATHER: I think a basic thing about clown can be a clown to want to fit in and by like others. And that's what our show was about — Gladys and Buttercup wanting to "grow up" and become "real women". They never connect directly but their behaviour is a contrast in itself.

JOHN: Is it one that's the best sort of political theatre the audience makes its own discoveries instead of being told. How did "Ready For Me?" develop, from basic idea to performable show?

JAN: We wanted to do a show about women. And it was clear from what we knew of our clowns already that Gladys could find in a natural feminist direction and Buttercup could explore herself in the realm of femininity. So we knew there was potential "feminist conflict" there from the start. And that's all we started with. The rest emerged from active experimental improvisations where we found things instinctively. *Laughter!* After two weeks of experimenting, emerging things under the name

that trying to remember it all at the end of the day, the actors in us said our clowns a tape recorder might help. And it did.

JOHN: But what was served of was a distillation of almost half a life time's experience, let alone weeks of improvisation. You must have had to be selective somehow.

JAN: We did decide to concentrate on three main areas: the last moment thing which we hoped would separate it for more than just that, the "mystery" thing and the sex thing.

HEATHER: Finding a way to explore the sex area without just making comments was really difficult. I think the breakthrough came when we began an "Eisenstein's five clowns" approach.

JOHN: I found that response especially interesting, perhaps because you felt it so open, for we in the audience remembered to bring to it as a basis of our own personal experience of, and perhaps about, the "sex-mystery" mythology. To me that's audience participation at its best. Have you ever felt the need for a sort of "electronic" or "working eye" figure, to give you feedback?

JAN: No, I'm very strong on that one. We couldn't combine it with our working process. We as performers know when something is "right" or not because we're in there feeling it. We also know there are problem areas with this show and given time we'll resolve them. But it's much easier for clowns who are ugly and tough but honest, that's true and don't shy away. **JOHN:** I feel the work Jan and Heather are doing is essential, in all senses. It would be tragic if *Clowne* were reduced to a book club.



Buttercup & Gladys — Theatrical Women



The Marionette Theatre of Australia Ltd

WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

The Marionette Theatre of Australia would like to find 1000 writers who are interested in working in its playwright-in-residence for up to four months in 1983.

Under the direction of Richard Johnston, the national company is based in Sydney and plans to apply jointly with a number to the Literature Board of the Australia Council for a grant to support the residency.

Real experience in writing for puppetry is not necessary and the script of scripts submitted during the residency for performance in 1983 may be for educational or children's audiences. An approved set of five visual elements of puppet theatre is essential as is the ability to communicate closely with members of the company.

Please write by 14 September with samples of previous work to:

Richard Johnston,
The Marionette Theatre of Australia Ltd
PO Box 187 Kings Cross NSW
Telephone (02) 567 1000

Travelling North shows David Williamson as mellow animal. The owner of this first edition between a superannuator and a 35 year old woman seems to have polished an anthropomorphic being by "sanitized Australian theatre" ownership in the early 70s — with a plethora of facts, names, and herbs.

Given that the hero dies it could be a tragedy — but the lack of an individual struggle as a lonely last step to achieve death is a compromised risk taken by the act of the hero. What rises at first a great success in *Travelling North* Williamson's unrelenting perception of humanity stripped with Chalkboard detail, and yet, satirical tone.

The concrete are those of the animal characters, of taking stock, of musing on what it all added up to in an agonized world after the challenge to research southern humanity presented, and the writing of poems, materialism the Victorian desire brought about. What is washed in the background, though no less worthy for that, now that human relationships are the ultimate that life has to offer — however fleeting or late in the day they may come.

Perhaps one point of anthropological significance is in the setting of northern New South Wales against the Victorian original. Williamson himself has suffered a state change — though now less in the big smoke of Sydney is applied to looking at the sub-impact of his home. His moving away from the embracing Irish, staidness of Melbourne brought about a mellowing and brought no points were reflection?

Frank Wilson has also travelled north from Melbourne. Reflected in his preparation as a part

David Williamson and Frank Wilson TRAVELLING NORTH

Interviewed by Robert Page.

wayman for them is a quiet spanning thirty years, beginning in a six challenge a week, supplementary at the Ten and returning via dramatic resistance to the stage, with a solid Wilson your stretch of interview, Wilson soon is as something of a coming of age the indigenous character. "When I started out I couldn't even play an Australian — not just only do I get a chance to create an Australian character, but I have cut top author writing a part for me."

The character is so accurately close to home — even to hearing the name Frank — that Wilson wondered if his wife had been concerned about his habit. "No," she replied, "but it's so true to life." "Big test he's a male character and I even admit that I am — we have a lot of things in common: materialism, discipline — just in theory is another expression for it." But, adds Williamson "tonicly unrelentingly."

One strand of the drama is the constant remembrance of the old man, which tells his deep feelings for the long suffering woman to the point where she, for a time, succumbs to the material and cultural tenet of the north.

The north and south contrasts of the play

written for Williamson "something that hasn't been noticed before in Australian drama. It highlights the vast landscape and climate differences available in the country." These ideas to differences are to be created using a new "anthropomorphic" language in the production.

"Rather like radio", explained Wilson. "We're creating a different acoustic — through here with sound and lighting, so that with each setting you will know where you are without being told. Each will have its own created atmosphere." The two major geographical locations have their effect on the human spirit, "it will give you the feeling of the isolation of the Melbourne atmosphere and the metropolitan warmth of the north."

The technique appears to be affording added wisdom to a work by a writer concerned as being dubbed as "travels with twice most observation" by Roger Paken. When asked on the review I saw since Williamson began with the reflective delivery of historical adaptation, but that went on to challenge it.

"I alternate between a unified situation, like *The Club*, where events happen over a couple of hours of real time, so a fragmented one like *Shook* — *Travelling North* is the most fragmented structure yet — 31 scenes. The formal structure was chosen to fit the material because it is about the last three years of Frank's life, so the obvious formal structure to choose is one that picks out the crucial moments of those last three years scene by scene. It is not unusual for me, my first play *Shook* was made scenes."

Actually, of course, this does nothing to answer the argument — naturalism is not based on such quantitative factors as the number of scenes in a play, and, as Williamson remarked himself in the introduction to the published version of *Shook*: "My career was greatly helped by the unrelenting and gradually naturalistic production given to *The Coming of Shook* — my plays... an almost a methodically naturalistic acting style." "Instead of attempting to discover the naturalism or realism in his own present of his work, why does he not boldly characterize what the pattern does now?"

Was he to do so, the next question might well be why not more boldly for the camera — which, as Ray Stanley points out elsewhere in the work, is itself in need of such naturalism? Naturalism was, after all, a late 19th century phenomenon which had all the fruits studied



front on him by the recording of actual reality which the moving cameras could supply. Increasing the number of scenes as in *Twentieth Work*, supports rather than demotes the view, Frank Wilson says. "Actually what David has written here is a film script ... he has taken a film script and put it on the stage."

Williamson answers this point without hesitation. "The stage can cope with more language than film: you can let the words do something interesting. That is in itself about how actors speak words — whereas in film a basic rhythm, situation is taken, the actors improvise and the director shoots 100 hours of film which he then cuts down to 24. And when films are criticised because of bad scripts, but the language is all right, what scripts? ... the director can write all that is needed. I feel at home in theatre. I can write words and people speak them."

Elsewhere he has written "In theatre one still works when it deals with real people in an ongoing situation. Audiences can then recognise characters and compare and test their own reactions to situations against those of the stage characters in a way that more truly connects than the cinema."

Language and intimacy, then, anchor David Williamson as a playwright — and one concerned with realism. Rodney Fisher explained, though, in his introduction to *The Department* that Williamson might, like them before him, be moving towards symbolism with "the mass of endless paper" as a metaphor for

the dehumanised world of bureaucratic education. Perhaps a continued association with Fisher would help Williamson discover a more theatrical form of drama should he want one. "A production of *Dona Flerty* with Australian newspapers — with news about drugs, lobbying, funds and enlarged (waving) paper books — would discover a shocking similarity related to film images of violence and humanity in *American Murders*."

In the case of *Twentieth Work* narrator hints at that the writer wanted on Fisher as director to pursue when was becoming a John Deane/Frank Sinatra type relationship. Newbold's door for John Bell this day is so hung, however, apparently proved more reasonable.

Whether Williamson accepts being an exponent of realism or not, there is no question of his cinema. He is one of the few playwrights who in *Blackout* would stop up. Why, then, when his plays are now too often made before they are, does he continue to understand them?

"You get straight plays are fairly rare things. Plays that are anything other than intense direct are story. When I was in New York there were only about five like four straight plays in Broadway to across the board. I think play writing with my depth of characterisation or atmosphere, just has to be calculated anywhere in the world. I don't see my work as typical commercial fare, but if my plays do have an intimacy and do work in commercial theatre

then I'm all in favour of a transfer."

Williamson recalls what for most would be a daunting competition — being listed to Allen Ayckbourn and Neil Simon. "No, I think Allen Ayckbourn is a marvellous craftsman, and Simon is too, but I think they take an overly optimistic and incoherent view of life. They serve people with people with real problems, whereas *Twentieth Work* is about someone dying for god's sake — actually going through the process of dying ..."

Some have said that for all Williamson has received approval now, the topical social comments of his plays will date them permanently. Frank Wilson staunchly repudiates this. "Not when you're dealing with human emotions and you are dealing with human emotions in David's plays. He knows them on a story like an incident in a football club, and then expands them out and over you do that they become timeless. Human beings don't really change. When Harry Truman wanted to know about people he went to his history books."

As David himself pointed out, one of his most recent plays, *Dona Flerty*, though now 10 years old, has just opened on the film screen in London in good reviews. The general, as Williamson said, only properly grows out of the particular.

*Rodney Fisher introduction to *The Department* Curragh 1975

**David Williamson introduction to *Dona Flerty* Curragh 1974

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Sydney has lost dozens of theatres over the past 180 years. Here the acknowledged authority on Aus. theatre buildings concludes his look at Sydney.

Ross Thorne: The Past One Hundred Years SYDNEY'S LOST THEATRES

PART TWO



County Theatre, Cardenagh St c 1930

1880 saw the sudden need for more theatrical accommodation as the Catholic Guild Hall on Cardenagh Street was pressed into service. It became the County (believed a variably theatrical hybrid Victorian/Gothic facade). The long hall was subdivided into stage and auditorium complete with proscenium boxes, a dress circle and sloping stalls laid over the old flat floor. In the process it was no longer required, there then being, in Sydney, few substantial theatres.

Another theatre which led a rather unauspicious life through the last years of the 19th and early years of the 20th centuries was the

Royal Standard in the new block towards Central Railway. It was the Royal Forester's Hall originally conceived as a playhouse, occasionally presenting drama but more frequently it was variety, dancing or vaudeville. At all in 1913 it became Hugh Buckley's and Violet Paget's Little Theatre, where after welcoming the new (highly non-commercial) drama of Sherriff Wilde or Arnold Bennett at intervals, the audience was treated to parodies of a capital sort.



Criterion Theatre, Pitt St & Park St 1916

In the same year of the inauguration of the Royal Standard (1886) the much admired Criterion opened. It was according to the Sydney Morning Herald "a great advance on Sydney theatres, and makes the spectators feel the means London does usual." Although the audience was on three levels it was probably smaller so, although larger than Holborn's Theatre Royal for its feeling of intimacy. It was particularly suitable for plays. Sydney-born and, among other performers, Dion Boucicault and Marie Tempest as well as the spectacular productions of Oscar Austin on its stage. It was purchased by the City Council in 1903 for the widening of Park Street.

In 1916 saw the opening of the handsome theatre, 1887 witnessed the opening of Sydney's greatest opera: Her Majesty's Theatre and Grand Opera House in Pitt Street. It was the first theatre to have accommodations complete in line with what we expect today on front of and behind the curtain. It contained a full fly tower, a relatively new facility, having a length of 189 feet from stage line to rear, and the new method of shifting scenery laterally on tracks was



Her Majesty's, Pitt St, after rebuilding in 1902

also able to be opened.

Her Majesty's opened with George Rippled in a spectacular *Henry IV* and was joined by fire during the J.C.W. production of *Fort Mifflin* in 1905. (The cheapest row with low horses took place on a moving floor with the scenery being rolled in the opposite direction.) The theatre was rebuilt in 1902 to continue seeing the previous names in variety, names such as Sarah Bernhardt, Anna Pavlova, Melba, John McCormack, Nellie Stewart, until 1903 when Gladys Moncrieff as *The Maid of the Mountains* using a special balcony on behalf of J.C. Williamson Theatre Ltd.

It was not until 1960 when Sydney would again see a new Her Majesty's, a revamped Regent which had originally opened in 1877 as a musical comedy house.

Near the original Her Majesty's there were to



County Theatre



Her Majesty's Theatre, Pitt St, built 1887

Sydney's Lost Theatres



Lyceum Theatre, No 55, (1890).

by only more successful than before the end of the century. The Lyceum in 1890 and the Palace opposite, in 1895. The Lyceum was a comfortable three-level theatre, indeed another hotel, with a stage almost 60 feet square; however, it became a film house as early as 1905. Now owned, the Methodist Church commenced using it as a Sunday morning hall in 1968 after demolishing the front.

Waller's ancient living memory there have disappeared, the levels St James originally built by him and John Fuller, and opening with *No No Nemesis* in 1828. There was the Savoy

which, for around 100 years to the 1930s, housed five theatre companies, particularly David Paton's Independent Theatre. Then there was the Philip Street Theatre in the St James Hall, where Bill O'Brien received his reputation as producer of those fabulous Philip Street Revues.

Going to the Theatre near Central Railway. The large theatre had commenced in the Adelphi in 1891 but was closed in 1903, becoming finally the Grand Opera House (to be used frequently for melodramas), then the Theatre from 1913 to 1926. The tradition of "Theatre"

Vanderbilt shows began in state of permanence under Harry Richards in 1893 as when originally opened as the Garrick Theatre in 1891 on the site of the Academy of Music. After a fire it was rebuilt for Richards in 1900. His season closed in 1909 but the audience was revived at the other end of town until 1966 when the first Trivoli show was seen.

The Alhambra was another variety theatre — music hall, but converting its existence as an auction room. Known first as the Haymarket Assembly it was the Alhambra from 1884 until it finished up as a picture house in the 1920s.

One urban remembered vanderbilt theatre which may soon disappear is the National. Opened in 1905 as Business National Assembly Theatre it was converted by the Pallier's management into a two-level theatre in 1909 and continued until "billed" films forced its conversion to a cinema (*The Box*) in 1938. Shortly after it was converted as the Mafiosi, the rubber shadow. By 1950 stage with music and dancing rooms in the northern side are still in existence.

Pallier's had another vanderbilt city theatre for a number of years before it was bought for an extension to Marcus Clark's department store in 1925. It was the Palace which commenced life as the Royal Palace Palace in 1908.

Of all the variety theatres the most charming and important was the Palace. Built originally in 1896 as a Palace of Varieties its interior was a strange mixture — a kind of Miesbach hotel with Gothic containing a forest of cast-iron posts. In 1904 the restaurant was rebuilt to provide an excellent house without curtains, for drama. After being a second run cinema through most of the 1930s and World War II its traditional Renaissance style of plasterwork was redecorated by Hays in antique cream, while the wall panels had their labels replaced with curious designs. Then for a short time it was a first run English like house before returning to being a live theatre for such shows as *Parade Laughter* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. It was much loved by audience and performer alike, although it was a fire hazard and the smoking ban was in force from the kitchen of Adams Hotel was done. It closed its stage when auctioned off in January 1970 before demolition made way for the ubiquitous residential tower.



Palace Theatre after 1924 alterations.

WRITER'S VIEW

The world premiere of Dorothy Hewett's *MAN FROM MUCKINUPIN* is on this month at the National Theatre in her home State of WA. She is one of our greatest writers — though the uncompromising nature of her genius has often led to controversy and less exposure in the theatre than is her right. Her major works include *Chapel Perilous*, *Bon Bons and Roses* for Lady and *Golden Oldies*.

Dorothy Hewett

"I feel that in 1979 things are looking up for me in the theatre. I have been giving a lot of thought to my position, my ideas, the past and the future, and I feel I have come up with a few unambiguous answers. I stopped thinking I had any straight answers at least ten years ago.

But in 1979 I have a new commissioned play at the National Theatre in Perth (my old hometown), a first Sydney production of "*The Golden Oldies*" directed by John Tasker at Jane Street, a new collection of poems, and I do feel that I know in which direction I am moving.

I suppose my Sydney career might be called "from Jane Street to Jane Street", and my critics might be forgiven for remarking that I don't seem to have moved far, as the career spans in seven years, when *Bon Bons and Roses* for Lady had a short season in that same holy theatre. I no had some lovely moments along the way. *The Chapel Perilous* was the second Australian play to be performed by the Old Tins in the well known venue of the Opera House, and with *Caroline and Dennis*, in the new Perth Theatre Company season. The *Past* at Oxford Street, Sydney, was the winner of "11 with a new

play *Pandora's Frost*, especially commissioned by Jim Stoenen.

So what went wrong? Why didn't the playthings go from strength to strength, why aren't my plays being performed as widely throughout the theatre and bringing me in a modest living, and, consequently, the salaries of the poets and the poet GPs?

If I was to accept what many of the critics say about me I would have to agree that I am "soft in the head" (at least sometimes) that I can't write dialogue and a playwright who can't write dialogue should surely take up some other profession, that my plays are all poorly constructed with no beginning, middle or end, that actors and actresses can't speak my lines because they are unspeakable (although poetic), and that I am only understood and supported by a handful of academics. Theatre critics call me a poet, poetry critics often refer to me as a playwright.

I see no contradiction in the two roles. In fact, writing poetry has been one way to teach myself precision, economy, style, language and to make imaginative and web of correspondences. It has made me sensitive to the power of image and symbol and the cadence of the spoken word.

I am at present also embroiled in a critical

work on modern Romantic Australian Poetry, and I see no contradiction in this either. My academic training, and the critical writing I've done for years in the 10 major newspapers and, yes, *Theatre Australia* has helped to develop my critical sense, and the language of criticism.

I find the multiple roles of playwright, poet and critic unusually challenging and satisfying, and although there have been periods when I thought, after particularly heart-breaking experiences and angry insights, that I would dramatically "put up the theatre", I was never really so since I began to write plays seriously in about 1966/67.

The theatre is of all writing the most brutal and the most exciting. Nothing else matches this confrontation in public between the playwright and the audience. Nothing else matches the lonely excitement of having actually created those dimensional people who move through a recognizable landscape of one's own imagining.

Nothing else for me matches the delight of working with other dedicated professionals in a co-operative enterprise. Sometimes this experience is magical, often, sometimes alarming, sometimes disastrous, sometimes none, but it is, never boring for one instant, and I always learn something new from it, as both a writer and a



The Man From Muckinupin — cast director producers LULU & WENDY Black, (top left to right) Jim Collier — Music: Christine Randall — Assistant Director: Murray Opler — Kate Gault: Patricia, Jenny McNeil — Mirrie Monroeheld and Chloepography: George Thomas — Stage Manager: Margaret Ford — Jack & Harry's Mum, Bill Kerr — Cord Brainerd — Miss Monroeheld: The Nether — Richard Tulkah — Jack/Harry Turnley — (bottom row left to right) Tony Treg — Designer: Rosemary Bell — Miss Cleary: Hammer, Dorothy Hewett — Playwright, Sally Sander — Elder Potters, Rose Haddock — Puppeteer: Stephen Berry — Director



The all-but-Parm producer of *Parade's Crown*. Photo: Alex von Gons

happening.

I had only recently, I now realise, accepted what seemed to be a fact, I would never have a really popular success in the Australian theatre, audiences and critics would always be sharply divided and there would always be periods of extraordinary beauty and downpour failure. It's not in the theatre that you are always only as good as your last play, and my last play had bombed rather spectacularly. It's not really much comfort to reflect that you can be appreciated as a presence or a corpse. Some small, some large, saying "How will you ever know?"

After the startling experience of *Parade's Crown* where so much depended on that first production for the viability of the Parm Company and where I felt I had not only gone down in flames myself but virtually taken the Parm with me, there was a period of despair. I felt for a long time that I didn't even want to go to the theatre. Everything connected with it was too painful.

But when I received the commission from the Perth Playhouse I knew that I had to come to terms with the Parm experience, learn from it perhaps, and start another play. It could have been a tragic one, God knows. I felt desperate enough, but then this was to be a play for the 1950s Anniversary of the founding of WA, economy, several were all indicated by the occasion. Besides I was sick and tired of feeling tragic, so I set down to write a play for a Festival: a romantic comedy with popular appeal, and the spirit of reconciliation built into it. It turned out to be the best thing in the world.

I was a little intimidated to be writing for a



Don Stern & Henry for Dorothy (WL). Photo: Merv Lahey

theatre that once caused a million of don't knows and almost belief in drive on opening night, and I was a little shocked by the occasional public critics who declared I'd never written a decent play in my life and hated Western Australia and Western Australians. It's been a strange mixed then because this is my fourth play set in WA, and I plan to do more Western Australia in the near a succession of the Australian story, known, becoming, ambivalent and mythical.

So it almost seemed as if all my hidden fears had surfaced in once. I had to write a play for a celebration of WA, for the National Theatre in Perth, and there would be some people who expected, perhaps even wanted, this play to fail.

And yet it was a joy to write. I drew on so much past experience, old stories, memory, skills learned in the eleven or twelve years since I had begun. I was conscious that I seemed to be writing more freely and with greater confidence. I was overcoming the old tugboat secret with another "chronicle play" that others were *The Chapel Perilous and Joan* and I was writing a popular play on the same of Jack Hibberd's "pioneer theatre".

I had my myth, my landscape, my period and my people. An archetypal WA situation prior to the period of the First World War and immediately afterwards, all the stories linked in as a child on the bushland verandah, the stories of pioneering, whitebark farmers, country men working, a father who landed at Gullpoint, the train running out from the siding blowing "Yankie Donnie Dandy" when the *Amazon* was declared, the first crystal wireless was the tale of Succession an admission of family matters.

I tried to write WA history, and an WA theme by an American Bill Griffith who wrote his thesis on a WA Country story. I created a town called Mulhargen "about as common, real as wheat, about Mayday", with a main street, a country store, a war memorial, a Town Hall. Mulhargen never existed except that it existed everywhere. I drew on moments of my own, Miss Mandrake coming to the Country Town Hall to play Othello, the Lark Brothers, local farmers and makeshift circumstances, saying "An' 'ere an Egg and an Onion". It could only remember the first line, the glamorous Mandrake brothers, the dancers' showers in their bell houses (I was in love with these girls).

Writing this play I acknowledge my debt to Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* to Randolph (Mick) Now for his recreation of country towns in the novels *Tessmerie* and *Merry-go-round in the Sea* to William Shakespeare for *The Taming of Shrew* (the play in the Mulhargen Town Hall) and the poetic wedding song borrowed characterly from *The Tempest* not to mention the odd bit out of *A Mulhargen Nymph's Dream* and the sleepwalking scene from *Macbeth*.

I commemorated my own delight in 'Wartha' Givens who roared the wheelbell every two

years *The Draft Song* and *The Joy Found* produced by R.C. Williamson, in *The Majesty*, when I was five.

Probably too there is the happy shadow of all those 1930s musicals dressed over to my grandfather's memory. *The Royal*, in *Salamanca*, where Barry Humphries now performs again.

There was also born the delight of working with Jim Coates, a composer I respect and admire for his originality and versatility.

Ever since our plan to work together in Canberra rapidly through some years ago we've continued ourselves that "happy and holy occasion" so all the events seem good to Mulhargen: the dramatic Stephen Henry is delighted with the script, I've long admired the work of his designer Tony Trapp. With only a few critical regulations, I can honestly say I'm looking forward to working again at the Playhouse.

Again from everything else I do feel that now I know what I'm doing in the theatre, what I want to achieve, and I want to be defined from it. My plays for future plays will also include finally new directions. I like to risk and grow. I love solving new stylistic, technical and language problems. For me it's part of the fascination of the whole process.

I don't feel like a failure or an outsider as they, Australian theatre players, and for that I have to thank many students, directors, actors, publishers, friends and supporters and you the grown of audience themselves. I will always be grateful for the interest and participation of the quite considerable number of primary students, and teachers who study and teach my plays.

My plans for the future are pretty small. They include finishing the stage adaptation of Brian Adams's novel, *Remember's Story* (which perhaps a screen play) solving the problems of writing my two volume autobiography, completing another collection of poetry, finishing my travel book on the Australian Bushman, and writing a new play set in WA again, but this one is due for north, side *Scythia*.

There are a few big dreams too in it: write a Chekhovian play about a pioneering family who live on the banks of a fabulous river in a film script with the power and poetry of a Breughel, a one woman show for Australia's greatest actors, Stephen Norton and I'd like to commission the melody and theme on the dislocation on my old workplace, Sydney novel *Bottom Up* and adapt it into a TV novel.

I'm delighted that the Literature Board of the Australia Council are supporting the concept of playwrights in residence with a particular theatre. I'd love to have the experience of being a working dramatist attached to a company. It almost happened last year with Mopla but we couldn't get it together.

But the biggest task of all is to work hard to become more accessible and thus more popular, which for me means addressing from my growth mythic vision of Australian theatre.

15

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WAITING FOR GODOT CHAPTER TWO

ANTHONY BURLAY

Waiting for Godot by Samuel Beckett (NIDA at Old Kent Roadhouse 96th Avenue 11 July 1979)
Director: George Whaley (Director: Lee Ford, Assistant Director: Jerry Laine Proch)

Visitors: Geoffrey Rush, Vincent, Mel Gibson (Piero: John Clayton) only: Robert Munn (The Boy: Vincent Lonsdale) (Physician)

Chorus: First by Peter Jones, Executive House: NIDA (Guest: 11 July 1979)

Director: Barry Denham (Director: Larry Hayward)

George: Nicholas: Len Kierman: Len Kierman: Greg: Richard: John: Michael: Michael: Douglas: Peter: Michael: Thomas: (Physician)

Under the watchful direction of George Whaley, assisted by Jerry Laine Proch, the NIDA at Lane Street annual season was again successful. Whaley's exceptionally fine adaptation of the Beckett/Rush/Barry On-Ge Selection was successful in that it will mean for audiences in August later this year. Two of the cast stayed on for the second production, *Waiting for Godot*. Beckett's classic story that explores a world of loneliness and despair.

Godot is a difficult play but George Whaley has mastered its inherent difficulties superbly. The casting of Geoffrey Rush (Vincent) and Mel Gibson (Barry) was perfect. Rush the tall, thin, pale, sensitive clown, Gibson, shorter, rounder, better suited. Here the clowning here of the play — the pairing of Vincent, the pious, the gay — was carried with consummate skill. Gibson's Baroque delivery added moments of delicious subtlety and the two shared more moments of excellent contrast. This was particularly true in the gloomy silence of the last part of Act One where the regularly apt description of the play, "Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful" and an awesome darkness. John Clayton's Piero was delightful with moments of detachment of mischief, of beauty and danger. Robert Munn's treatment of the new Introduction "Waiting" speech was the best I have ever seen, strong deliciously across a game of tennis and so apparently good that it became intelligently witty. The Lee Ford's stage design, enhanced by Tony Roster's creative lighting, created all an excellent production. I find a very difficult to quote with Harry Kierman's treatment "I think it's the best I've ever seen".

Not Simon's last Chapter Two probably has the best, a new play to full houses at the Ensemble. Chapter Two dealt with the



Robert Munn (Left), Geoffrey Rush (Visiting) and Mel Gibson (Ensemble) in NIDA's *Waiting for Godot*. Photo: Brenda Goss

whispering sound and murmurs of George Schander, a 42 year old writer, and Anne Malone, an actress in her thirties. The other characters are Leo, George's younger brother, a chaotic PR man, and Faye Medford, Anne's actress friend, who is contemplating adultery with the married Leo.

But Chapter Two cannot be understood without "Chapter One". This concerns the past, especially the recent past of death. Barbara, George's wife and divorcee dies, Anne's husband. By the end of the play we have a composite picture of these two Barbers, George's wife and divorcee dies, Anne's husband. By the end of the play we have a composite picture of these two Barbers, the perfect mate ("I've met the woman in life, God has been good to you") and Clot, the failed foundation construction husband.

George's Chapter One ends as deep trauma, a refusal to admit to Barbara's death, is gone away for memory or, as Jane goes by, to give up "half play". Anne's Chapter One ends with her loss to forget the world of men and just herself and her name. But God is a cruel hand to George when Anne came into his life, and Anne finds that George puts her "on her own" after years of standing on my heels. Interviewers note that a simple event completely changed the lives of Leo and Faye, their respective Chapter Ones being: Leo married the capable of marriage and Faye, marriage in the past or perhaps the divided seven year old ("he's lost his sense of humor, he keeps rolling away from me as he's").

The George/Kierman story is potentially poignant and unique dramatic stuff. A man deeply torn and divided by his wife's death adjusting to a new love suddenly. A woman disillusioned by several years of married marriage making a man whose she deeply loves but also having to adjust as well as endure his quiet indifference of quitters. OK. But Simon does

not always lose it in its target. I do not find, like some Sidney critics, George a "victim" several from Jean's words, my love to trust, will pay husband following their honeymoon, an unconvincing dramatic device. On the contrary, Simon's psychological accuracy here has been consistently pointed dramatically throughout the first act. George's dream, his near collapse of a woman when moments of Barbara nearly his and Anne's presence, his come yet moving inclusion in the morning of the wedding. What Simon is the playwright's inability to detach himself from the self-indulgence of his characters.

The actor capable with Simon is with his own passed "hardly, however". There is no doubt that his words should with his own but so often he treats his characters with his own sense of humor because off things. Anne's husband does not necessarily lead out of the moment, as in one English we put a "Only window stopping, strictly no sale".

The production itself was virtually flawless. Larry Hayward's set must be the Ensemble best set as required, on screen perfectly balancing the play, truly organic with the text. Hugo Gordon's direction works with great skill to show the play in its most pure and how Simon's play was the strong foundation with a secured and rich performance in Anne. Len Kierman seemed come at ease with the only, alive George that the self-giving role of the character but that it is more a more concern Greg Radford was a delightful Leo, full of fun, and most impressive in the Leo/Jane scene where we learn of George's breakdown after Barbara's death. Suzanne Hawley was at ease with Faye, she and Radford carried off the lighter comedy with great timing and fun.



L.R. Nicholas Lyne, Graham Bird and
 Bruce/Chris in Day 1 Case Meeting.
 Photo: J. McMillan

Legend For Our Time

BOY'S OWN MURDER

2011年12月16日

Don's Quest (Mallory) by Jonathan Henshel and Alan Bergman. The first book in the *Quest* series. Henshel and Bergman, who have written together for years, have created a rich, detailed world. Don's Quest is a story of a young boy who is lost in a strange, magical world. The book is a classic of the genre, and it is a must-read for anyone who loves fantasy.

Director, Graham Road and Mary O'Neill Musical Education
 Gary O'Donoghue, *Composers* **Michael O'Keefe**
 Neil Ross, *John Wick Luthier*, *St. Cecilia's Choir*, *Gary O'Donoghue*, *Charles Hart*, *Paul Johnson*, *Gary O'Donoghue*, *Graham Road*, *Super Musicology*, *Wanda Lynn*, *L.J. O'Donoghue*, *Super Ode*, *Steven St. Paul*, and *Wick Luthier*, *Elizabeth Walker*

School Assembly — the brain trust Meeting; the headmaster's chattering; the English master copping, onto his faculty to Quince and School while the bad boys crack up and the good boys get the blame — we were nothing like the outrageous pantomime sort since. How else do the setting for the new happening by the remarkable partnership of madcap and music, Graham Bond and Rory O'Donoghue, at the Ark Gallery, Spidye, in Durrumun, a hideously recognizable set to Great Plains School the bare, where an end-of-year production of *Mel-Bach* is in the office.

If you loved *Flannery* for the chance you got to see Ray's Own McLean — even more so, I think, because there's more in it than the celebration of the Ok happened at a house and, like some and marvelous songs was Kate Peapack, one black singer that in a choir, elbow on knee, head and hand, chewing gum and going with rusty blue eyes in the audience as, with her opening line she shyly plucked out the heart of Flannery's mystery: "See, this blue"

And she had good reasons. The spectrometer was cheap, she had no money for the sale of her sports and Hotties meant no more to her than their over-developed posterior. The whole game was devoted to the resolution of the agonizing personal dilemma: it was one for Shantel or her seduction to concern themselves with the ratings state of Denmark.

But today we are living in warmer times. The Head Prefect looks it in Canberra and yesterday's warlike ardours are today's daily bludgers and whipping boys. It is back to school with a vengeance — and so, in *Stevi Chen* (1997), Christine is awarded one by the

Lefferts is a Headmaster who presides with authoritarianism in public and back his own way to beat the system in college.

How does one survive in the authoritarian society of Kazakhstan? If one is Taty Shalabayeva, one knows of the hardships: progressivism in the age of 13, marriage bar, a widowed, and then enters the school on return for free board and education for oneself and one's sons. Taty happily accepts a hospital in the agreement which enables their education to continue unhindered. Now, at 35 the headmaster independently acts, by a proxy to all other's emotions and the child's life, because

If, on the other hand, you are Head Boy like Hunt, with an influential father, you arrange to be the Head and look forward to a *joy ride* through life. Or, finally if you have the financial pull, you simply take the whole school over, like little Morris Milkitt, and the moment the school stopped, Devenant School becomes a school and the Head installs the ostentatiously gay English master, a sudden convert to Judaism.

In this interview document, the world we are told, will be taken over by Jews and homosexuals. (What about the Arabs? Some might feel it a mercy for all those of a more not all such reasons for

But then as Dorothy Hewett has remarked, Australian society is characterised by a corrupt innocence — and here it seems to me, Roy's *Class* McArthur double-edged tongue.

Blond and O'Donoghue, with that marvellous gift, familiar from *Shameless Jack* days, for moving easily between robust fun, scholarly erudition and pathos, divide the audience with the inspired frenzy of these songs (with Jim Sturgis) and music, and their performances as Terry Shakespeare and Elton the English Master (who also plays Lady Macbeth). The show has much in common with *Shameless Jack* in the strength of its lyrics behind the measured stage. The map of songs not heard, appealingly, the dark, unacknowledged feelings left out of view of his.

As a result, the following is a list of the most common types of...

disturbingly transmutate — perhaps even destructively. As points in we look toward Mafiosi — extraordinarily played by Elizabeth Wiler — perched on the piano stool in an amazing green spot and singing sadly, "I guess I haven't got any real friends, but that's no much better than having no friends at all," we know by the pricking in our hearts that something wicked this way comes. Explained and ignored: Mafiosi will be here long by dining with "Lady Macbeth, the lady of Desat" at the show's big rock number — a moment when the innocent fun develops a deadly /Noise. This is the moment when the boys of mid Manhattan find themselves out on the streets.

And to it is for the audience too. As the critical pupil papers to have an economic climate in which they must be glad of any job that comes along, they have as with a befuddling school song "We mean the boys of old Devonshire." The new world of school chaps, sometimes like one of the *swishers* system. But as to Shakespeare, the teacher goes. He is a late sense of security, so Terry Shakespeare, and a schoolboy as it, find the cold word of reality awaiting his world. "Can any of you give me a job to make the audience? The get two children to support." The sad vision represents as the audience depends from the crowded, *freely* there, into the dull world of Cleveland Street.

In *Boy's Own*, Michael-Clay has at last caught up with itself on the theater. It tells us about now. All the recent plays one can think of could have been written five years ago. *Boy's Own* itself could only have been written now. It is a hodgepodge of extraordinary and atrocious shopping, as directed by Ronald and Mark Gould and with an outstanding cast of whom Paul Johnstone is the blond boy and Nicholas Lee and Henry O'Brien as Tonya's sons, there is no place unaccounted for. It is the group's unapologetic faith that they all play an instrument to some play, dance and do dramatic acts. The whole is very good and easy with them on a cult — it has some a flight on the page. It must utterly transcend in a further theater.



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delighting our Paul Henth's Henth a everywhere and everything, a flowering, emerging ideas, an articulated economic man and finally a walking in Henth's birth, a mystery of the cinema of both protagonists. Jack Henth's Henth's multi-levelled art race to start the opening demands of the play, as the composition and concept of a thirty-odd strong ensemble — and it is an ensemble for once, which is an unusual achievement in the H.

teachy and incoherent for ardentans, and says it's just the fuel of the faith of their performance which happens in sugar mills mining stamps pressure patterns, and press on up and down the main. The Theophrastus shows are, and always have been, a sugar-canned social message and on the message of the first cartoon, the more you laugh, the more the message sinks. With real political cartoonists that message sinks as message at the ball converted, the vaguely sympathetic non-Texas point who is miserable to being told exactly what happened in East Texas, or the position that someone has to read more from

The basic style developed by the Trosage is a big, quick hit gag, premised alone on an almost two dimensional cartoon context. Historical facts and images are woven into analogous situations which gain their strength when it involved later in the programme. Thus the next fight between a Japanese sailor and the Dutch is culled in the later clash fight between Saitama and the USA. *Van Gogh* sketches the format, there are seven actors in a full house and a half show which includes Indonesian shadow puppetry and film footage taken by the Australian journalists murdered at Balibo. *Shantana*, on the other hand is a tight three

Richard (William) Jones was the leading force in establishing the Troupe and developing the spirit, and he wrote four *Indians*. Richard's latest production was in *The White Family Show* at La Brea, with his poems of importance of membership working up a script from scratch started here in good stead. Here is the La Brea Company on home ground. Dynamic roles like Santa Monica and Clara (Sharon) handle the broad and play comedy with ease, and the troupe has always been used in the kind of moderate participation called for here.

The Show takes the form of a distinctly second-rate variety programme, performed by the continually excitable *It's a Family* family. The family has determined that the Los Angeles management refuse a worthwhile financial return if you don't play "tryin' and teach" in that now-forgotten dialect on the musical, and we are duly presented with the best bit of shambolic half-faded preposterous antics. When they finally sort themselves out the family presents us with a series of acts encompassing vaudeville-style singing, stand-up comedy, music and mockumentary. Like all stand-ups at work in their when almost to real life. By *It's a Family*, to *Man Every Hill*, a pose on with that slightly comical singing, being on *Oliver Newton*. *It's a Family* is a show that is not only a very good example, but also a very good one.

The ship is pure fun, and as it settles down during the run, it will be the slickest "second seat" experience seen in years.

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that latest plays, *Five Indulgences* and *Amadeus* in their forms have told a somewhat unimpressive. The following discussion, however, shows *Amadeus* performed at

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double up on rules. The other live on the whole-trilled rule. Among these Roman Lox (mainly Francisco) and Sore Adrell (mainly Lubanski) were outstanding, performing with ease and authority. Sore Lox's short career prior to the collapse down the social hierarchy

Martina Lanning played all the female parts apart from Victoria, and in doing so revealed a range and sophistication as an actress I'd not associated her with previously. Her vocal skills as the angry mother Cornelia was beautifully done, and almost matched by her performance when in Isabella, Beatrice's wife. But it is a card distinguished by the clever and moving they gave to Webster's difficult verse from King Henry's Cardinal Monmouth used too. His speech of acceptance to the girl's suit seems was a high point of the production.

Blackburn's Flanagan was a thoroughly professional piece of work that fell just short of being a focus of the play in Flanagan's brief history of England. As Virginia Woods Blackburn was aware, where nobility was the most like real soccer was a perennial complaint for her, but less convincing when commentators was the point. As Blackburn, Klaus Scholz found energy and excitement like the postcard football death scene, but was reluctant not to comment. It was a pity that on a production otherwise so strong the most glaring weakness should occur at the heart of the play. It is contrary to believe on the issue of Blackburn's direct presence in the Western. Scholz did not leave me to believe in

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the production is that one can remove such scenes

worries about the performance of major roles and yet still seems on the quality of the production. For a still lower quality, the stark average standard chance of death in a person and (except with) of accident and loss, the moralization in dramatic terms of the "dead remains the dead" which is a clear case, almost

The professor for the Undergraduate Chemical Society of the University of Western Australia at Stashokopur's *Five Pigeons* warrants a few remarks. It is a special case because it is directed by, and features, in the role of Pinocchio, a consummate professional in Professor Daniel Schmitt, Professor of Chemie an Princeton University, who came to Perth at the invitation of the English Department of UWA. He will take up a 6-week appointment as Director of Research.

The primary duty of the Director of Residence is to produce a play — simply that, and eventually the chance to leave. What makes most is the time factor — the appointment is made for six weeks — taking off a week for getting acquainted, two weeks for the run and you are left with about a week's rehearsal. What is not a lot of time when most of the actors are amateur students. Daniel Seltzer chose *The Tempest* probably no doubt because he having performed the role of Prospero in a New York production gave him a solid back-ground from which to work, in comparison for the limited rehearsal time. What I found most remarkable about this production however was that — despite the time — which must be considered the worst

up such a commanding performance as his. Fragers, Sedgwick's major role, as director, was not exploited — was, in fact, equally successful.

Despite the unfairness inherent in a competition where experience and natural talent played a role, there was a basic consensus that performance level throughout the race was together with accurate and the accuracy on the whole extremely well-proved. Some of the individual performances below the amateur class of the performance, among them those of China, Germany (where Axel was not quite as good as he had been), and where general sensitivity and intuition was notable. Doug Robertson (who handled the sudden expansion in sympathy of Clinton in the First round) was again a good speech with remarkable clarity and interest and Colin Gray was (in a more interesting, in the role of the central figure) was again a good speech.

The design by Ken Campbell (Dobbe) was basically very good — the stage space reduced to a raised three-seated circle which proved a most efficient playing area — but some of the scenery was more elaborate than it had to be, serious problems for my assistants.

On the whole, the standard of the production was very high indeed. Inevitably, unfortunately, some of the supporting young actors, directors and designers in this city have had the gratifying of working with a man whose own performance pointed what has been able to get the place together as all in such a short time suggested that he was thoroughly professional and highly skilled indeed.

In excellent shape
RIDDYGORE

[illegible][illegible]

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society of WA is a remarkable institution. Its performers combine the enthusiasm of the amateur with the consistently high standards of a professional company, and its aims are laudable.

The post's presentation is *Ashtypoor* like original and "offensive" spelling has been restored, as there are now no Yimanan translations left in Hindi.

Swatyping—like between the most popular of the Survey Opuses and the "too classical" *Yemen of the Guard*—its satirical basis are good, its manner is broad and frequently funny like, and altogether, the feeling that follows rather than. Collect it is control is slightly nuanced by the loss in the center use.

This particularly rapid uncolligible pace that's generally been found if it is a down it

100

Ray Charles's dramatic is stylish, and in collaboration with director Gailman Maclean, makes a wonderfully imaginative use of the visual possibilities. Act II is bright and colorful, dominated by the Professional Unhappiness, gently waving pink banners against the backdrop of a slightly rainwater-fading village, with barrels and torches constantly doubling in signs to the onstage area. Act II is, in fact, in the grand style, a suitable environment for ghostly processors, in timely protest costumes and "mouk" hats. The contrast in mood between "pretty" Victorian order and the dark things ruthlessly imposed by some Victorian rules and germs is best brought out by the transformation of "Mad Mad Girl" (Hattie Wagoner, who has madmen in three and real terror in the dark) resemble Katha in a Victorian playing the Queen of the May, but once she has been turned and become respectable, in several black, she is changed into a puppet like creature, when only the code word "Bismarck" can keep on even her. In fact, the "Bismarck" scene is one of the highlights of the evening.

The singing throughout is first rate. Most of the leading singers are by now typecast as storm giants — Christopher Walken is none more the young hero with the sturdy voice, but this time has to add the speed of pure magic to his monstrous. Tony Johnson makes a character

Sean Blahard, who has to be both an actor and an extremely tickle and a gaggle while singing like an angel. Don Lusk, the classically "funny" man has the chance to strut off as a Bud Brainer and end on a Qued One again though he has made better songs when he's had Roy Wenzel as one of his best sides in years in Richard (Gardner), the golden Foster Brainer. He dominates the stage — not only does he have a fine voice but he is extremely tall, and instead of trying to disguise his height his constant proximity it is used for comic and dramatic effect. Valerie Malone, sporting a classy beauty as heathens makes a glibbed Diane Hansen (as used in love with a ghost), and especially in the delicious word comedies the morning to come. clabbers of dignity and high comedy all the while keeping control of his rich midsize voice. Kevin Roach makes a truly Byronic Mr. Rochester (given of a Crenshaw Bar with) and of short is an unusual of Greville available, then someone should write one for him immediately.

The Backwoods are an particularly fine work, and in fact the whole story, is a pleasure to the eye and to the ear. Musical Director Percy Jackson should be commended.

A programme now pays tribute to the work done in past years by John Milton Jones in Brestford in raising the standards of the G and S Society — the project team is clearly keeping it in excellent shape.



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THE POINT ISN'T TO TELL YOU

SUZANNE SPUNLER

The Point Isn't To Tell You written, directed and staged by the
Brett Milder Company, Elizabeth Drake, Jenny Kemp and
Robert Milder
110 West End Street, Melbourne, The Women's Education Centre
(Performance)

The Brett Milder Company emerged from the Australian National studios of the Australian Performing Group in late 1976 with a group initiated production in the drama category called *Stairs*. Subsequently the group then consisting of Robert Milder, Ron De Winter and Sue Ingleson developed a full scale and highly successful production based on the life and writings of the American poet Sylvia Plath and they followed this with an equally successful adaptation of Roger's *Peer Gynt*. They were later joined by Jenny Kemp, their vice teacher and director for a production in the Plam Factory of *Amory and Cleopatra* in June 1977. This year the group received a grant from The Australian Council which has enabled them to work independently of the APG and Rob Milder and Jenny Kemp, the two remaining members have been joined by Elizabeth Drake.

Their current production at La Marna was first seen a month ago at St Marks Hall in Fitzroy, at that time it was staged in tandem with the second half company, impressionistic sketches. Later this year *The Point Isn't To Tell You* will be staged in Sydney.

Until the production *Stairs* work had been solid ensemble work with all members of the group acting and directing the performance. Their style was characterised by precise physical exploration of voice and gesture which

incorporated acute observation by extended Maudslayi.

Their work was very much acting about acting — in all three previous productions all the roles were shared between the actors on stage which worked against and commented upon the common practice of one actor being identifiable from the character he or she played to his audience in *Peer Gynt* all three played Peer at different times in the play.

In *The Point Isn't To Tell You* they have broken with that formal division and would almost be said to have come full circle to a form of Roger's *Stairs*. Rob Milder and Jenny Kemp wrote the play — a one actor — about a man who wakes up in the morning, gets dressed, has breakfast and waits for his girlfriend to arrive, in the meantime he reminisces on his relationship so far and the state of the world. Rob Milder plays the lead role and it is to all intents a one person show. The writing is a sharp and wryly amusing comment on the obsessive domestic rituals of a person living alone in a style that is reminiscent of Beckett's prose works — *Molloy* and *Malone*. The set is sparse — a table, a chair, a bed and a cupboard all painted white.

The play concentrates on the total routine of the every day with vision into the man's feelings of how he will handle the next encounter with the woman. The only way it could possibly work, but almost have been as impressive as it was depends entirely on Rob Milder's performance. And it was stunning — pure craft and pure art, undeniably mixed with everything that smacked of simple emotion stripped away. Each flicker of a gesture a movement and perfectly articulated. It is the sort of theatre that focuses on performance art and to my mind theatre itself, and all the better for it.



Robert Milder (The Man) in *The Point Isn't To Tell You*

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Sean Myers (interviewer) and Jonathan Hardy (279) in Hecuba's *The Immortalist* Photo: Jeff Bailey

The punitive and the possible

THE WOMAN AND THE IMMORTALIST

MARGARET MCCLUSKEY

The Woman by Edward Bond. *The Immortalist* Performing Group at the Perth Theatre (Melbourne, Vic. opened 17 July 1979). Director: Anne Turner. Design: Anne Turner. Lighting: David Kilgus. Music: Helen Clay. Sound: Margaret Clouston. Props: Phil West. Cost: Anne and Phil Williams. (Perth Theatre)

The Immortalist by Hecuba Wilson. *Heaven Theatre* Productions at the Perth Theatre (Melbourne, Vic. opened 17 July 1979). Director: Sean Myers. (279, Jonathan Hardy) (Perth Theatre)

The reflection of gratuitous punishment being the prerogative of tyrants, the APG will be hard pressed to justify a nation of *The Woman* when they have their collective soul at the policy gates. It would appear that in the struggle of despot which confronts the early 70s totalitarianism, a new breed of despot and theatre goers has emerged. Perhaps Theatre for the Minorities, as it were, of 85 a la

And Edward Bond — I visualize him as a repressed Caligula, wearing a wig — pines himself a superior Major Dome of the regime of terror. In the programme notes — another turn of the thumb screw — it is recorded that Bond feels his plays' first female responses have been because they are fundamentally "political". My own hostile reaction was the result of a well justified fury at being obliged to sit through nearly three hours of "political" conservatism



Maria Clara Hincul and Margaret Cameron (joined) in APG's *The Immortalist*

The Woman is consistently styled as a Greek Tragedy, the time being the time of Troy by the Greeks. After a great deal of obscure politicking, between the wife of Hecuba, is taken voluntarily hostage by Hecuba, the leader of the Trojans. In captivity, Hecuba entices the Greeks at the gate of Troy to go home, but they won't and they get a statue captured by the Trojans. For her pains, Hecuba is nailed up, and Hecuba picks out an eye rather than see her grandson hauled off to a well. Interval.

Those of the audience who don't escape at interval — a tricky procedure in the warden of the Prison, with several staged guards at every door, were driven into an informal Agave mode up of a circle of seats, denying us any possibility of departure. A group of happy children ruble characters in a leaver dance, and we discover that Hecuba and Hecuba have escaped to the paradise, to be remanded soon.

Unfamiliarly, the third night is detailed by the arrival of Hecuba, in search of the statue. He demands to kill the children of Hecuba, but they are taken over the goods. Hecuba maintains a front seat, the winner of which will get the statue. Hecuba is pretty confident of success, as he only appeared as a Caligula-like tyrant who has won Hecuba's heart. Somehow the tyrant was the son Hecuba allowed and Hecuba is killed. The winning Greeks are driven from the island. The End.

The poem of the play itself is: On what was more charming was the obvious limitation of the text. It is beyond doubt that the APG borrows any number of able and talented actors. Wilfred Lord, in Hecuba was limited to the point of incapacity. Maria Clara Hincul and Margaret Cameron directed it, accepted a variety of all the two parts, which were most complex. The other actors suffered from a common ailment which prevented with the unrepresentable they over-acted.

It is a disarming come apparent for the APG in particular and theatre in general that *The Woman* was performed at all. Union of actors you embrace the flag of Terror.

It was with heavy heart that I departed the parade of the Playhouse on the following evening. The worst of my fears were allayed when I discovered that *The Immortalist* was only about an hour long. A "drawing room piece", the play is styled as an interview in a play of its length, this has become dramatic, but is a useful and well used device in shorter pieces.

The company, better played by Sean Myers, interview 279 (Jonathan Hardy) a man who is 279 out of 279 and looks like continuing his attempt to infinity. Hecuba and punishment by the cynic company, 279 calmly expounds his theory of language: a combination of fact and the conviction that to believe in reality is to be mortal. He maintains that there is a false concept imposed by the capitalist regime which demands, stereotyped in all things. Jonathan Hardy, in an immaculately understated performance, gave complete plausibility in his role. And has the Sean Myers' unforgettable happening, to the

conviction of immortality. It was funny, cheap, witty, smart — and short. And if there weren't any considerations to be pointed from the master of the play, there was from the style.

Theatre mostly occurs at night. Theatre goes mostly work during the day. So they're a lot hard by it's clock. And they really believe that they have done the world's work for the day. They're looking for entertainment, relaxation, leisure. They want to laugh a lot, cry a lot. Most Aunt Alans have been persuaded into going to the theatre, so that's one of the places they seek their laughs and tears. And they're perfectly happy to have it in short bursts so they can go to sleep or a party afterwards. A play like *The Immortalist* caters for that audience. And perhaps if more theatres considered that audience rather than the bunch of frustrated aesthetes who use the presentation as a formal chamber, the stage might once again become a thing of magic and infinite possibility.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 6

"pub theatre". The *Barryellis* is now into its third production and is turning people away.

In July 1979 I directed a co-operative of professional actors *Gilguy Goes Down Under* which opened the *Chatterbox Theatre* for its own company — *Act Theatre Productions*. With luck, we will now be turning people away.

Pub theatre exists

Private productions, in fact, number, in less than three years, at least that's not counting the activities of the informal amateur groups. *Blackie Players*, at the *Grand Hotel*.

I have been involved, as writer, director or assistant director, in ten of those fifteen productions, and so I feel qualified to complain that *Theatre Australia* in its 10 issues to date, has not found one inch of space. *Theatre Guild* is depicted, in which its existence, probably or even to view the current and accessible form of *pub theatre*.

And yet one can only imagine *TAF* editors being absolutely desperate for space when two whole pages of the December 1977 were devoted to Barry Ellison's scolding and in-depth report on "Where the Stars Lie", on a note that would surely have been more at home in *TAF West*.

The policy of pub theatre, certainly as far as *Act Theatre Productions* is concerned is to provide cheap (\$5.50, accessible) local lounge entertainment for a relatively wide cross section of the general public. Industry people seem to be satisfied, their intrigued but it is the many people who have come and live theatre and who are now breaking the ice with pub theatre for whom our highest hopes are held. In the language of the local, "non-theatre" people find perfectly comfortable, and if that first experience with theatre can be not only positive but also most enjoyable, it is not hard to imagine a few of them being whetted for more.

At present we have no Patrick White, Jim Stoeness or Eric Fitzgerald to write lyrical about making theatre to the people, but then, for all their dreams, we are doing what they only talked about.

Whether pub theatre exists in other cities I do not know, but it is not up to me to find out. It is not even up to me to be informing *TAF* about a reasonably established form of theatrical enterprise that has apparently eluded its notice for three years.

Seriously, if "non" magazine is to be taken seriously, it should be seeking out just such enterprises. *Pub theatre* isn't *Boyz*, I know, but it is infinitely more relevant to the concerns of suburban Sydney. Professionals working in pub theatre do not at present run the Equity round, but they are professionals none the less. And they do get paid. As Geoff Pollan of the Stage Company also pointed out. *Unpaid members of Actors Equity* do not like being called

amateurs, even if they're working for nothing although, even here it is hard to understand *TAF's* policy, on several amateur and private groups, *La Bête* to name one, receive almost no notice (except).

It is extremely difficult for someone Sydney to get anything even resembling good regular theatre work and it is virtually impossible for small, unconnected groups to find anywhere to play, let alone to find a "theatre" of their own.

Spelling a two professional pub theatre companies do have some-what in ball game and free regular action, and both companies have some and enjoying good regular work.

Pub theatre is hard to stay. How many more years will pass before *Theatre Australia* gives it the coverage it deserves?

Yours faithfully,
Makelin Fawcett,
Director,
Act Theatre Productions,
Hornsby, NSW

PS A successful opening article would be "What exactly is pub theatre?" (What are your views for freelance contributions?)

Dear Sir,

Through W F Oakes (*TAF May*) makes a few valid points, overall he is the appears to be somewhat unbalanced in regard to the world of amateur groups.

Existing, as most groups do, financially from production to production, experimenting is something that the majority of groups simply cannot afford. "Local documentary theatre of the *Peer Chapman* style" — if I remember correctly *Peer Chapman* was a professional director who worked with one group over a very long period something like a few years to achieve his desired results. The amount of time and money it takes to do this sort of thing is quite considerable. How many *Peer Chapman* are there in Australia, how many groups are available to carry out this kind of thing? Most audiences "may not know much about" theatre but they know what they like" (no puns) and experimentation is not one of the things they like.

W F Oakes does not mention the names of plays in the *Third Supper*. If they were plays dealing with lower classes, containing for \$150 might be possible, but if the middle or upper classes an attraction rather than high standard would be more in the point. Does the \$150 include musicians power used time and labour?

It is amusing that anyone should have to ask anyone beyond theatre is deserving as against professional. The main reason would have to be fairly obvious, that of finance. Amateur theatre companies do not have to pay out anywhere near the finances of professional companies. That apart, Mr and Mrs Average Theatre (Mr especially) are there entitled to go to see a musical which has already proved to

be a success, in their own area, with a cast filled with many people they know, in a region with which they're familiar.

Why should an aspect be made finally at an amateur level with some university teaching about it? And at what way? As far as I can see (as universities do not teach drama along the lines of say *NIDA* so much of what they do teach would be applicable to amateur groups) most of the university graduates I have known who have featured the performing arts foremost in their studies have drifted on from the point of view of applying them in the professional sector of the arts.

That's the word that immediately springs to mind regarding the first sentence in item two. I think it will be found that the ones who with professional directors, producers, entrepreneurs, agents, politicians and, in a certain extent, the general public. And quite rightly so, when money is being paid for a performance the paper has right to know that the goods they're paying for have been, and will be, forthcoming in an area where the talent is presumed to be evenly concentrated and therefore the best. Nearly every professional person I have ever met or known has been more than willing to talk about their amateur background, as kindly stated, the reluctance will be found elsewhere.

The answers to the last two questions are so obvious they don't even be given the grace of a sentence.

As a professional director working with amateur groups (more on a voluntary I can assure you it would be great to have my work reviewed by the likes of *Theatre Australia* more than anything else for my own self esteem. But on what level should it be done? It is a seriously difficult to achieve the simplest technical effect with casts where quite often at least half of them simply have no idea of "how" or "why" "Place" from many sources, that as he was to be delivered. Standards from performer to performer, from group to group vary so greatly I ask again, how could it be done in such a way that would be fair and not condemning? From experience before me the money is certainly earned. Efforts are fruitful in minor ways but will only be truly fruitful when there is consistent work with experienced teachers and/or directors.

As the Arts Council of NSW has kindly noted as an entrepreneur I can hardly see how this would improve amateur theatre in the country. The subsequent seminars, workshops etc that they have conducted may have had some merit, but again for any radical result to be seen, constant classes are required.

Yes, I must certainly agree that a very important area has been neglected with regards the performing arts but of the misconceptions that W F Oakes has an example of the thinking of others, it is very wonder!!

Yours faithfully,
Margaret Donohue-Sims
Newtown, NSW.

Raymond Stanley investigates the present situation, Elizabeth Riddell reviews the latest films

FILM EXTRA

The Honeymoon Is Over

Raymond Stanley

The 1979 Australian Film Institute awards will be presented in Sydney on September 28, and the ceremony will be televised by the Nine Network.

The 16 films competing are: *Blue Fin*, *Cathy's Child*, *Darwin!*, *Dumbbells*, *In Search of Anna*, *Kostas*, *The Last Of The Knucklemen*, *Mad Max*, *The Money Movers*, *My Brilliant Career*, *The Night The Prowler*, *The Odd Angry Shot*, *Palm Beach*, *Soap Star*, *Third Person Plural* and *Tim*.

To coincide with the awards Raymond Stanley, who contributes a weekly column to the London trade weekly *Screen International* takes a glance at the current Australian film scene, giving views of some leading film figures he has recently interviewed.

Australia has reached the stage where some strong like a score of films are being made each year but "the honeymoon between the Australian public and Australian film is over". That is the opinion of Helen Sedgwick, who made *Screen Day* one of Australia's most successful films, both in terms of box office and awards.

After years of a non-existent film industry, Australia has reached the stage where something like a score of films are being made each year, international prize is being heaped upon many, and they have been bought by 54 countries. It's only a few are doing well at the Australian box office.

No one doubts that the current wave of films exist because of the injection into film production of Government money — both at a Federal and State level.

Films are expected to show profits, although a series of institutional exposures they can "sell". Australia is the world, show the way of life here,

and act as a tourist board. Every cent invested in a mainstream way, makes some sort of economic return.

Producer Philip Adams, who is much in anyone was responsible for the setting up of an Australian film industry, wanted to me that we not only have an Australian film industry "but an Australian film industry, and as my role is a lot of control and in the next couple of years I think we'll have a shaking out process and flush up with nothing like that many state bodies surviving as for our film operators.

IS THERE ENOUGH SUBSIDY?

John Duigan, who directed *Mouth To Mouth* and *Dumbbells*, believes the Australian film industry compared to other art forms such as theatre, opera or ballet, is drastically under-subsidised. "The industry per head of audience that goes to see films is very compared to all the other art forms," he told me. "It's very important to consider that the film isn't really any different to the other art forms, it's simply a more popular one."

There are indications that investment from the private sector will far exceed that of governments, which could mean aid from the latter sector being concentrated more upon the marketing of our pictures, and other areas.

Mad Max, which is shaping up as the most successful Australian film ever made was financed privately, and so will be *Lionel* — a film based on William May's novel about the "Bromwich Murders".

Taxation incentives announced last December provide a write-off of 100% of investment in Australian film rights over a period of two years instead of 25 years. Addressing the 1979 New version of the Motion Picture Exhibitors' Association of Queensland in July, the Minister for Finance, Eric Robinson, indicated that since that scheme was introduced there is a changing a marked shift of emphasis away from direct Government equity investment in films towards a willingness on the part of private investors to supply finance for art films themselves.

"In the first six months of operation" he stated, "50 films and television programmes have been approved under the Scheme and about 30 applications are currently under con-



Graham Kennedy in *The Odd Angry Shot*

AUS FILM: THE HONEYMOON IS OVER

colleagues. This represents a budget of about \$21.5 million for the film to be certified about \$20 million of that amount is represented by private investment and the remaining \$1.5 million is by direct Commonwealth and State government investment."

"Within Australia's industry is highly protected, it's the only way it survives", commented John Weir, producer of *Assembly Women and Diamonds*. "In the case of the film industry it is protected, but in the market place it's competing with door-to-door peddlers, that and a hundred others as much in the market place we're really in a much more difficult position than most Australians, because effectively we're in a dumping market. The majors will dominate their position in Australia, even if the Australian cinema is \$22,000-\$30,000."

The Chairman of the Australian Film Commission, Ken Wain, stressed in his that Australia having created a film industry will continue to have one.

"Money could be more efficiently spent if we had a success incentive scheme", is the view of veteran director Tim Burstall whose latest picture is *The Last Of The Summer*. "We've reached the point now where we need a few changes. The Government puts in about three quarters of the cost of a proposed picture, say for a \$400,000 picture \$300,000 is put up by the Government. For the most part the producers don't take more than about \$100,000, so basically \$300,000 is lost. That's all the industry sees off. It works like a sort of wheel whereby, that is money at the front end, but at the other end let people find the budgets, but in the Government put dollar for dollar in the box office."

THE RETURN TO PRODUCERS

According to Anthony Bonello, who produced films like *Caddy*, *The Animals* and *The Night The President*, producers are very dissatisfied that some of their films have made a lot of money in the box office but return very little, if anything, to their producers. "We think that should get to be a reappraised at Government level — commercial level — of the equity of the hand-out of the dollar from the box office. That is what we on the one — the best producers — get a few share of the dollar from the box office taken at the box office."

Because a particular film has a long run at the box office the general public probably believes it is returning enormous sums of money to its producers. Such is not the case. It will cost \$1 million of dollars to keep a cinema open, rent, staffing, advertising, etc., and the return of the producer is only from the amount over that particular figure. The exhibitor is quite happy if the actual figure is maintained each week — but there is little if any return to the producer.

Cinema is popular belief, film producers in this country are not. When a budget is

passed in the request of the APC or a state corporation, usually it is the producer's salary which suffers.

Around the time *Newspaper* opened in Melbourne I talked with its producer and director, David Elicks and Philip Meyer, and Elicks pointed the way as to why studios are able to make pictures at lower budgets than overseas. "It seems to be the producers and the director who paid the set for and who, six months after the film's finished shooting, are still sitting around plugging in. I'm sure Phil and I wouldn't mind being paid ten dollars an hour for the work we've put into it."

INTERNATIONAL OR TELEVISION?

There is much controversy amongst film makers as to whether it is necessary to aim at the international market — which inevitably means America — or concentrating upon the domestic scene. Naturally every film maker would like his film to succeed overseas, but many are sold direct to German television or the BBC and not released theatrically. In fact general opinion seems to be that many of our films should have been made for television at the first place.

"A number of people working in the industry should work for television", is the view of director Peter Weir (*Peter At His Majesty's The Last Wave* etc). "The television is in a very poor way. There's the cold fact of equipment."

Our project which was made specifically for television but actually obtained only a cinema release here was Tim Hutton's *The Last Temptation*. "If a film has primarily a television market", Hutton told me, "it is an excellent idea to get a some sort of cinema exposure, even if the box office is not amazing, because you get the critics to become a talking point, and it's not a bad idea for that to happen while you're negotiating your television price."

The Grundy Organisation, producers of *The Young Doctors*, *The Restless Years* and *Prisoner* in the past have made several television films, but with commercial TV channels here at longer intervals in the future, are no longer interested in future films raised. The majority of films have been produced for cinema here between \$100,000 and a little over a million dollars — which is a falling in our market as far as producing similar films is concerned. Grundy's managing director Ian Holmes, told me: "You either have to produce them at a much lower budget than that for the Australian cinema if they're going to be Australian films with basically Australian appeal, or if you're going to produce at a higher budget cost — an over a million dollars or higher — then they must be international films with an excellent prospect of sale in other parts of the world."

Michael Hignett, who directed *Between Wars*, *The P J Hobbins* and recently *The American*, and is a director of the New South Wales Film Corporation, believes the industry is

in an "interesting sort of impasse." "The middle of the road Australian film is costing too much for locally what a can get out of the domestic market and with some foreign sales. There is room here for the domestic, maybe if a cost less than \$400,000, \$300,000 or whatever, from there on I think you've got to go international as a big way."

Ian Maughan of the New Network observed to me: "What's happening is that the cost of the Australian movie is going up a degree that must be counteracted before it's made. We can't now necessarily get the same costs back in Australia."

FILMS FOR AUSTRALIA

One professor who does not believe in aiming for the international market is Philip Ashman. "The Australian film industry's future must be predicated on going back to reality, and the reality is with 14 million people of whom three million go to the movies. We've got to pull our heads in and make films that matter here."

"We have got to keep our eye on the inner national market, of course", was the comment from John Murren, Chief Executive of the South Australian Film Corporation, "but we must never sit down cynically and attempt to make an international film or even sit down to make a box office film just for."

"There's no sense in us having totally indigenous films that don't make sense to the rest of the world", asserted Michael Pate, who recently produced and directed *Fun*. "To date we haven't yet had a totally successful non-temperary film."

Jack Thompson has some definite and relevant ideas on the local film industry, and is hoping to produce soon his last movie, *Where's Stranger*. "I don't think there is a formula for the magic film that will crack the overseas market", he told me, "nor do I think that we should be making international films at the expense of the local film. I don't think that we should have our feet planted on the Australian market as if that were the answer of the Australian film industry, because if we did that we wouldn't have a film industry for very long."

According to Helen Salter "The chances of making a big in the American market are very, very slim, with the old equipment."

"Just make films that you really care about and want to make for your country, and it'll cross the borders if it's good enough", suggested Fred Schepers director of *The Devils Playground* and *The Chum of Ammie Blackstock*. "Why have we got to imitate America? If you want to die — go to America."

Believing there is room for both large and small budget movies, but important that the emphasis be on the region of \$150,000-\$400,000, John Duggan's opinion is that a producer to aim at the local market as the first place. "We should be trying to get our budgets in the money that we can expect to get back locally, so that any

entire industry has got a thing on the mind. When the subject matter is such that we can really hope to get into film markets in a big way we can use much larger budgets."

Here Salton pointed out: "Even if you make a cheap film it costs \$350,000. You may realize your money there and pick up a few television sales here and there. But you never make any money."

For Mike Theodidis an international movie involves above the line elements, especially in the end result. It's got to have more than just an entertainment value. It's got to have a couple of international names. I don't say right now, but it should have above the line talent connections (it might depend on who) and then, as this goes on, you can get it."

"Like French, the Swedes and the Czechs make their movies for being as distinctive as they are. And I would like to think that we would be that distinctive," was the view of Fred Schappo. "Firstly, why are you importing the stars? To what area is it going to sell your film? If it opens up a television market, or television money in America, then you have to have a different set of stars to those ones that appeal to the theatre market. All we can really afford are names, and names are not going to be the big pull that a star is."

HAVE WE GOT THE WRITERS?

Most people one talks to in the film industry, inside or out of it, believe the biggest weakness in Australian film is the scripting. "The pit of the industry is not our financing," Paul Blandford, Chairman of the NSW Film Corporation told me "and we certainly would going to see pictures from overseas. As long as we have Australian producers, Australian directors and Australian artistic control, we can't see any danger in supplementing the portion of the industry which is weak, and that is the script writing."

Conversely, Ian Blomson believes that a high budget producer requires quality scripts and that, from the point of view of raising such finance, it is necessary to look at name writers. "They are important. Starting Hollywood when scripted in *The Man Of The Night* to want the screenplay of their big budget *X & Y* *Monsters*." "But I don't think that applies necessarily to the making of films, which are low or medium budget films — that are primarily for the Australian market," said Blomson. "It is not a necessity, in fact it is not very practicable either because most writers live outside in the United States and expensive to use."

"At the level of actually turning out an international script I think we're weak," Tim Burton told me. "Our talent in terms of turning out people who can do our sort of thing is quite okay, but we haven't got stars — that is, we've got nobody who's got drawing power overseas."

One person who will lay no blame on the writer's door is Mike Theodidis. "The responsibility is, first, second and last, with the



Mad Max starring Mel Gibson

screenwriting process, but if the producer has not been able to generate reasonably good material, then it's the producer's fault, and you start attaching the writers all the time comes to me to be not only kind of chaotic, but it's sort of hypocritical. What happens here is that the writers really have had very little direction. They tried to write reasonable stories — that is stories for an assemble group of people rather than star parts. That's not the writer's fault that's the good ol' Aussie producer's fault."

AND THE FUTURE?

What of the future then of the Australian film industry? In recent months there has been a fall in film production around the country. As Patricia Russell, producer of *Picture At Hanging Rock*, *Shock of Day* and *Summerfall* observed to me: "The Australian film industry is going through a stage of working out. It's not putting money to make films in this country it is getting harder."

John Lumond, producer/director of pictures such as *Australia After Dark*, *The ABC of Sex* and *Sex and Polarity*, made another point. "Everybody here is going out for the prestige and the awards. I don't think there's any future in that, because if doesn't pay any bills. I still want to get the commercial film."

"If you're going to have a regular industry, you try to get people working regularly. There could be a lot more films made here, but there seems to be no money. Say they like APC and their corporations want going to finance its films a year. All right, let them go for the

picture and the people who are seen, thereby awards with list of the top, but make the other five. Carry on film, which and grab film or anything, because that'll give the director, the producer, the writer, the actors and the technicians all work. They want them all to be the other way."

John Daniel, Director of Projects Development at the APC, made other points. "The producers have been watching, for the first time in their lives, the box office and what is making money and what isn't making money, and as long as they're coming to make films, not for the sake of making films, but for the people to watch. They are being more realistic."

Simon Salton believes Australian films "will have to be a little more intellectual, a bit more arthouse than they are. They need for a market that doesn't prove the director."

Philip Adams believes we have been over producing by a factor of about three fold. "In my view we can sustain the attention with say a couple of *Amuse Blackstone* a year and a couple of *midwestern* films, and then perhaps three or four less significant films, for the diversity of you like. But for mass demand I think we can really handle only about six features a year. And the other reason for that is that there's no hope of investors getting their money back — really making a profit at least."

"The Australian film industry has a future, but the future isn't Chapman and a car's perspective. It isn't Mike-Goldwyn Haywood a much more Scandinavian, it's back where we started. Where else could we go?"



The Night The Provider

Sydney Film Festival

It never ceases to amaze me that so many subscribers to the Film Festival (\$79 down to \$32, plus some extras, probably adding another \$10) actually seem to dislike so many of the films on offer. Probably most of them, if asked, would not admit it. But a pretty fair assessment can be made of the chances of queries by somebody standing in a lavatory queue in good deal of Festival time is taken up standing in lavatory queues. I can only talk about ladies' lavatories, perhaps the men's more euphoric on the grounds that you would think that people who have paid this sort of money and have to defy the elements — it's a well known meteorological fact that heavy rain always occurs during the Film Festival — and Sydney city traffic, would list a number of them in having a good time at their annual outing to the flicks. Perhaps it actually is their annual outing, they may never make it to the neighbourhood cinema or the city complexes, or on the other hand they may be secret Chas. Einarsson visitors, in which case they would never find *Mimosa* or *The Idiot* in the Fringe Valley or *Mix of Merble* elsewhere (believe me, and the *Real Douglas* review. *My Calabash*, *My Ain Foll* and *My Ain Home* understandably depressing).

Nevertheless the Gold (SFF) winners actually filed in their voting cards by the closing night, Saturday June 10, when the Festival director, the unapproachable, intemperately courteous David Stratton, made an announcement. The votes for the 12 best came out something like this, not in order of popularity: *The Marriage of Maria Braun*, *Knight in the Heart*, *Kurosawa*, *The Idiot* in the Fringe Valley (Greville), *A Simple Story*, *Donner 13* (French), *Mad Carter in Prague* (Greville), *Mix of Merble* (Polak), *To My Beloved* (USOR), *Woman in a Twisted Garden* (Slovak), *The AP Squad* and *Blue Color* (USOR). In fact *The Marriage of Maria Braun* and *Knight in the Heart*, by Friedlander and Wenzel, came top of the list.

When David Stratton was making up his programme for the Festival, not one film in the collection had been chosen for commercial release. Even his American opening and closing films, *Mimosa* and *A Perfect Couple* by Stanley Donen and Robert Altman respectively, may have a struggle to get commercial success. Films from the 1979 Festival are only now drifting on to the screens — *Guerrillas*, *Providence* etc. They used to be shown in the small art houses, but these have crumbled and it is increasingly difficult to find something that isn't black boxes or run-of-the-mill.

My own choice from the first 12 would be *The Marriage of Maria Braun* which is Friedlander at his wisest here and has a startling performance by a little known — to us — German actress

named Hanna Schygalla, and a plot of typically dazzling complexity. *The Idiot* in the Fringe Valley by Mike Pappasopoulos which will be a shock to those Aussies whose knowledge of Greek life is confined to a weekend on Hydra. The director's black look at a family of the Greek middle-class is heartily funny and extremely well produced and performed. *Mix of Merble* by Andras Woyta, known for *Amel* and *Ashe* and *Diamonds* about how a musician might can buy a one time here where philosophy and mathematics are out of date.

Both Festival films are quite ordinary, and *A Simple Story* by Claude Sautou is especially disappointing because of features the delightful and talented Romy Schneider. It has nothing to say beyond a few clichés about the re-ordering of a woman's life when she is divorced and a working mother. The French film that apparently failed to please the voters was *Mimosa* (Greville) by Claude Chabrol, a recreation of a crime that occurred in the 1930's and took up considerable space in the French press. The star is Isabel Huppert, the signature heroine of *The Lover* and the film tells us extraordinarily clear the progress of a discomfited schoolgirl from the idiosyncratic household of absent parents into a career of almost total pleasure with pathetically small rewards.

Chabrol is a master of this kind of film, an establishment of the amateur, ill-informed, inefficient "crimes", and Isabel Huppert gives a performance to match.

Among other treasures of the festival, which this year offered films from 36 countries (including *Amel* and *Amel on France*) 13 which was shown at 11 just one night last year at \$4.00 and was made by a new Australian director John Carpenter who also wrote the screenplay and did the music, *Mimosa* a film by Alan Tanen about two girls who drop out in a Swiss romance, run short of money, take to petty crime and take one chance too many, *The Seal Fenn* a plummy, average film from Hungary about what it was like when Stalin was still the boss, *Polak* about war George and *Donner's Pictures* made by James Ivory with a mixed English (Peggy Ashcroft, American and Indian) and, interestingly funny about the interaction of the races, *Ship Tenter* an intelligent Canadian film not anywhere but extremely well made, so sophisticated and with such a tight story line that it should be required viewing for Australian producers, directors and writers, the aforementioned Douglas trilogy, a powerful underpinning that has taken a long time to make because Douglas, whose story it is, used the same actor, Stephen Archibald, from boy to man.

The only film that does not enter a frenzy of

borderline was *Alexander* — Why? from Days, made by Youssef Choucri. With others I had finally hoped for a look at *Alexander* (don't look at *The Alexandria Quarter* made by him) Choucri's film could have been made anywhere — though I concede that his family as the spotlight was probably identifiably middle class Alexandrian. I stayed until the end because impressed by a movie continuously based on the score to the effect that parents should neither come late nor leave early. I was again with the first but not the second. Life is too short to sit through a bad film or a bad play.

The Festival's opening film, *Mimosa* (Greville) is a good little job, or rather two good little jobs. Made by Stanley Donen with George C. Scott and Toshi Doyne, the first film in *Donner's Pictures* and the second *Donner's Pictures* of 1979 (and up respectively of a dummy Cagney type vehicle and a *Blue* (Greville) type vehicle to run two good terms. The first is black and white, the second colour and both are extremely amusing.

To close the enterprise the board and director chose *A Perfect Couple*, one of three recent Robert Altman films, a rather hectic story about computer dating between the son of a financially class but poor American family and a girl who lives in a girl commune in Los Angeles. Little Tokyo and song with a pop band, possibly the worst pop band in existence. To say it does not come off would be too kind, but Altman can be forgiven a few failures.

AUST FILMS AT FEST

The *Plumber* which may be Post War's best film in the world was included in the Festival on the evening of June 19 and shows the first night on commercial television. It was in fact made for television backed by the Australian Film Commission, the South Australian Film Corporation and TMSI (written by Peter West) who was also for had been busying for some years, directed by him and put together in three weeks on a very small budget is credits. West as a producer was a fine nothing to do with his *Plumber* of *Plumber* (The Car, that Air Photo or The Last Wave). West has made a career for himself about as a screenwriter and has featured apparently a biological channel and the sticky plumber who comes to repair but in fact has been plumbing in a dirty high rise apartment building near the University of Adelaide. Their roles are played by Judy Mavris (as her most kindly attractive Robert Colby and her) Keith. There is a good deal in it relating to the lives that women live the way they are regarded by sturdy representatives of the working class and the competitive agencies of

musical activities.

I have no better signal here — *The Plumber* responds, as *Murphy's Rock* and *The Last Wave* did, to a senseless of World's. In his lovely plot, he each contains a few. In the case of *The Plumber* the film is that one terrible word from the outcroppings under his husband and the plumber would have been out of the list before you could say, "Redden said." The film has, however, a stunning dramatic and comic of what goes below in concerning. Judy Moore, Gailly and Ivan Kain give impressive performances.

I can see what Alice Thoms meant to do with *Rock*. It's the second concerning feature brought Australian film which he wrote and directed and which starred Bryan Brown. They also make films without Bryan Brown. It's called *Nat Young*, John Magregor and Amanda Perry has a slight case of *The* important sound of the radio is that of Australia.

His last makes so of this movie, perhaps, and yet there's something it did not exactly for artists. (I mean, the more time is, several, doubtless too high so that almost all dialogue is lost. There is a hint to how much something an audience can take, and a hint to how much it can be left to its own devices to discover what is going on. As far as I can gather Thoms is going to a picture of the Plumber in the room of other trading, dropping out and from around. It is, several million cannot to create — too many can become better ones and how are you make. Peter Bough shall look beautiful, to it is.

Two entirely successful shorts were *One Man Movie* and *the Others*, a last time something that not alone film by Stephen Walker (*Love Letters* from *Traffic* Road) beautifully suggested beautifully photographed full of laughter and good looking, and *Derry* made by Ben Cardillo from a short story by Patrick White.



Murphy

The Old and New in Enacted Violence Knucklemen and Mad Max

The Law of the Knucklemen and *Mad Max* are two of the latest Australian films to hit a ratings market, represent the old and the new increased violence — body conflict between males and the impact of one piece of law is equal to another. (I think we can disregard the metropolitan awareness, just followed by some teenagers, that *Mad Max* is not violent because so much as all blood flows.)

The date of *the Knucklemen* is from the 1930s. *Platoon*, play of the same name which had a run a few years ago. *Platoon* had had some of history making a violent move to the world in desert somewhere near Afghanistan, but for some purposes had performed on conflict here in the bushlands. In the interest of speaking up the action the film director, Tim Barrell, has been working with the desert, convincing a crew and all day of that the theme is the landscape. However, when knucklemen change the pace then not it remains aggressively coarse and still being, and not less classically poetic.

The Knucklemen was written each of it by James, Jerry, and occasionally someone, are played as in writing skill to each veteran of experience and like as *Central Authority*, Garry Chappin, Michael Duffield, Mike Preece, Michael Cason, Stewart Fairbank, and Peter Maher. Michael Duffield and Peter Maher contribute two good performances, the film moved by having the only intelligent dialogue — the script is mainly without any humour though there is much "repetitive" of the order of the "you and who else" caliber — and the latter by the characterisation which requires him to say and do almost nothing, but simply a little inquiry.

There is a good deal of talk about citizenship for and against but a theme, but light on a subject which has long been, in spite of *The*

Great Western (Harris to move, it has in *Glenn*).

The performance in *Mad Max* are the best of its claims to its audience. The only two words moving from *Knucklemen* as *Mad Max* with some and from *Glenn*. *Mad Max* played by Mel Gibson is pure physical.

There is so much talking around of men and taken that a becomes, moreover, and in the final half hour runs a lot of laughs, but it actually starts out as menacing, and in those that the line between say and command can be a (that is because of the physical presence of law enforcement, is not) and has of course been made a beautiful movie before.

The story is set in the not too distant future when the Australian roads have become over more hazardous highways of death dealing just

Attack on Prison 14 by gangs and individuals. Max leads *Max* first against the night and then directly against and some conduct, and outside them. Max is corrupted beyond his *Knucklemen* into a rage with.

The film was previously funded, produced by *Boris Kennedy*, directed by George Miller who is said to be a close to a person life, and therefore familiar with various of the road on suburban streets and in the country ward. It has power of cinematography from David Egby and an equally powerful score from Bryan May. The name of vehicle handling one against the other is being damaged with pictures sometimes gets to the way of the music. The music is, certainly, who made it all possible was *Glenn Page*. The film cost around \$100,000 and has been sold abroad.



The Law of the Knucklemen

Cathy's Child and In Search of Anna



In Search of Anna

The Federal and State organisations who fund money into Australian feature films must be looking at corporate spin-off sales. Two new films *Cathy's Child* and *In Search of Anna* will help them to forget recent turkey. One of these films has the closest approach of a good thriller though it does not happen to be about physical destruction — and is based on fact, while the other uses outrageous offbeat fiction with two imaginative offbeat actors to carry it out.

Cathy's Child directed by Donald Crombie with pace and accuracy right up to a minute or two before the end, has an absolute plus in the performance of Michelle Fairman as Cathy: the young Maltese woman married to a Greek who has slipped off her feet, so her husband with their youngest child, Maria. The case was well presented at the time after Cathy's crime was taken up in the columns of news by the Sydney newspaper *The Sun* which was a *Hot Line* department and column. *Hot Line* purports to get things done, for obstructed or underprivileged citizens when all else fails. For Cathy it worked and the effort has probably been that lawyer always successful lawyers, taking legal right, step off with their children.

Cathy's Child is very plain, asking but a limited emotion. The suspenseful and excitement. I could not have felt the cinema in any more, even after Cathy and Maria were in the Sun on at Kingsford Smith Airport drinking champagne with the two journalists who had brought off the happy ending. Nor that Maria, aged three, was drinking champagne the film maintains a steady level of morality.

Michelle Fairman's performance is consistently interesting and true. Once having almost, accidentally, released the newspaper's help, she presents a subtly endearing picture of a woman who must give up. Mr Fairman has shown before that she understands working class women and it is a delight to imagine anyone doing better in the role.



Cathy's Child

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Alan Cassell's version of the Irishman portraying Dick Winstley (whose look of the same name supplies the theme) is inspired in it Bryan Brown's depiction of Norder. Dick Lane's editor Arthur Duggan has a lot of fun with a politician's role and Willie French is believable as an Australian diplomat, finally out of his depth but willing to try anything. It is interesting to see Donald Crombie's work on *Cathy's Child* after the cinematic success of *The Irishman*. He is moving back into comedy film.

Cathy's Child was produced by Pam Oliver and David Sullivan with the major members being the Australian Film Commission, the NSW Film Corporation and Northern

NSW Film Corporation and Northern

In Search of Anna is the story of a young ex-con on the road from Melbourne to Sydney, teaching rodeo and getting one after some unfortunate experience from a girl of ambiguous age and status who drives a handsome 1983 Ford and does not seem to care how soon she gets to her destination. The man, Tony, wants to catch up with the woman too, so he goes left behind him when he was worried of robbery and imprisoned on Footbridge for six years. The driver Sam, at defiance about unusual problems of his own. They drift up the coast — a walk on a beach a little later cannot mean, tentative delicately. There is no "plot" but there are sub-plots. What is the money that Tony stole? Will he, his next mistake get a free lunch? Why did Tony's mother kill herself? Why does Sam kill herself Sam and what does she do for a living? What is Anna if she left to Sydney?

Working as writer, director and producer, *In Search of Anna* is Robert Stone's first real feature. He became known for a film he made with his late Robert McNamara. *In Search of Anna* is dedicated to Michael but *In Search of Anna* is more ambitious and took three years of several pre-productions in contrast to its seven weeks' sequence of shooting on the road.

Tony is played by Richard More, a 29-year-old stage and film actor, writer and film editor. He emerges from *Anna* as a star of the future. Judy Merson, an actress who can cultivate a touch of warm wisdom if the role calls for it, but who has also a very contemporary vein of glamour and acceptance in Sam. Bill Hunter appears as her lover and the movie a successful photographer, and there is a superb performance by Chris Haywood as a thief and sometimes thief named Jerry. The character of Jerry is one of the most appealing in recent films. Stone has in fact included two scenes of notable aggression: the beating up of Tony by Jerry and mates and the encounter between Tony and a pair of country thugs in which he finds there is also a woman with an iron bar. They are an all-round contrast to the almost dreamy drive along the boardwalk coast.

The money is important in this film. Six bands are used and no musicians, including a Greek. George Moschovides is a Clio Harper. Alan Steel and the electronic John Mann. The film is clearly the product of hard work, as well as imagination from such proved professional people as Michael Elphick, director of photography, Sally Campbell, art director, Michael Morris, musical director, no name talent in a long list. The Australian Film Commission and the Victorian Film Corporation were associated in production and the film is released in Australia, which is a tragedy.

Not since the visits of the Moscow Art Theatre and Berliner Ensemble has there been such an impact from a foreign company like the Peking Opera.

LONDON THEATRE — BY IRVING WARDLE*

INFLUENCE FROM THE EAST

The clumpy young actor rehearsing Orlando for the National Theatre's *As You Like It* glummed his lips open to a wofly cry, took a deep breath, and performed a beautiful light faced curtsy. "Whatever was that?" gasped his director. "Sorry," the actor explained. "I'm heavily influenced by the Chinese Opera this morning." He couldn't have apologised: the curtsyed a staying in the show.

I imagine that little scene has been happening in rehearsal rooms all over town since the Shanghai Peking Opera troupe arrived at the Coliseum. It is 21 years since that last London visit, and their resurgence after the ten year blackout of the Cultural Revolution, has all the appearance of a modest working dog at last released from its collar. We had forgotten, if we ever knew, that such a level of performance was possible, and actors of my generation have been emerging humbled from the Coliseum, echoing Maizi's words on broken juggling: "It makes me ashamed of myself. I sit and what is there that I can do as well as the Peking?" Not since our first night of the Moscow Art Theatre and the Berlin Ensemble has any foreign company had such an impact on the profession in England, let alone on the general public.

Maizi elsewhere makes the point that "change is a good teacher: so are despair, defeat, exposure to unchangeable events and laughter", all of which sounds very Chinese and certainly applies to the company's opening number, "At the Cross Roads Inn", where an excited general gets into a mixed fight with an innkeeper in the dark — the stage meanwhile remaining brightly lit. It was on this famous track that Peter Shaffer based *Shogun*. Comedy? What Shaffer created was the element of danger, through which the Chinese project their comedy. The innkeeper establishes himself as a clown through his little scornful stance, and thereafter the big laughs combine with sword play as the combatant's glittering weapons come within a fraction of lopping off each other's ears and noses.

When the Western theatre attempts something special it is not simply that the acrobatics fall uncomparably short of the Chinese, but also that they give you too much to look at. The Peking troupe, though they regularly dissolve into a blur of revolving bodies and sword fireworks, invariably take the audience's attention into

"IRVING WARDLE is the theatre critic for *The Times*

account. Your reaction to the lamp that is, "He can't possibly have just done that" the performer then focuses for a few seconds, allowing you to register in fact that he has performed the impossible, and giving your mind an image it can retain.

The company, famously, combine singing, dance, acrobatics, martial arts, and acting within a single act, whose precision extends to the symbolic make-up which may take two hours to apply. With that time to carry that to mention heavily arched eyebrows spreading four flags from the back, the impression they give is one of schismata and having all the time in the world. If there is one image I shall never forget it is that of Qiu Shufang in an eight yards long for form against an avenue of villagers, and wailing off an avalanche of silver spheres with a lozenge, a high move, a turn of the knee, so that each sphere bounced back to be caught by the hand that threw it. One year ago once her head and without looking she takes a field to return it over her head, two years after

simultaneously, and she performs a similar feat in walloping them both back. The piece is called 'The Phoenix of Fire' including a final flame episode during which Shufang completes a costume change from white egret to firebird, and an intricate stand for the company's 'own robots, arising from the ashes of the Great of Four.

There has also been a tryout with another legendary foreign troupe, the Levitt Theatre, returning after 18 years to their old London crash pad at the Round House with a much remodelled spectacle called *Providence*.

A quite visible group of London went up on the prospect of another night of experimental uplift with these cultural harvest of the 1960s, and for the first part of the thirty-minute spectacle, working through *Aschylus* by way of *Wagnerian*, *Samuel West*, and the *Ensemble* and featuring a trained up Judith Maier singing "Zap them with beetles", the scene from seemed confused.

Then, amazingly, came a second act opening up the *Belshazzar* Revolution with total coherence and absolute mastery of perfect animal theatre styles. Lenin and Co journey to the Federal Station on four chairs in the Thornton Wilder manner, the years of the Great



The Standing Mountains presented by Peking Opera of the London Coliseum and the Royal Festival Hall



The Living Theatre

Expresso presents a shard of homocentric performance. Re-creating Dostoev's festival on the morning of the Winter Palace, Julian Birk recruits spectators and a Red Army battalion from the audience, and rehearses them for ten minutes for a spectacle that went off like clockwork. The story is told from the anarchist viewpoint of Kropotkin, as the Revolution erupts. And with news of the prison, filling up again a voice is heard saying "Free me!" It is, nonetheless, revealed as a spokesman as a dark, protracted career, visible only by the light attached to his body. It is an image brought out of Bole, an intersection point of myth and history where meaning and magic become indistinguishable. This is a territory the Living Theatre occupy too seldom, but when they do it is theirs alone.

I fear there is little to be said of Tina Soppard's latest work, *Eight's Member* (Cahoon's Marbels) which marks the debut of the British

American Repertory Company (Colloquial Theatre). The first part opens as a school prize play in someone's language and proceeds to a double replay of *Hemlock*, finally combining the whole rapidly to 90 seconds. All good fun. Cahoon's *Marbels* two men in homage to the Czech dissident author Pavel Kohout belongs to Soppard's new East European phase, and is based on the Living Room Theatre performance with which learned Czechoslovak artists are now circumventing the rigors of "normalisation". The play shows one such performance being broken up by a Party apparition who comes bawling at the door at the moment after the murder of Duncan. From that well-placed effect the piece descends a gassy pole of word play and function because neither very funny nor clever nor showing much insight into the intelligent subtleties of Czech subversion on which Soppard elsewhere has written with much understanding.

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Children's Theatre: A series to mark The International Year of the Child.

BRENT MCGREGOR is the Artistic Director of Freewheel TIE team based in the Hunter region.

Freewheeling TIE

No more cars, sleep or leave for himself alone

*Harvest and dreams and working the young
Does a take place in a small room
But in the spaces of other men's lives*

This quote from Harold Pinter touches directly on the social role of TIE work in two cities and in regional communities. Our work cannot be contained within school structures but must create connections with the surrounding community.

Our work should stress the social interaction we have with our families in the "small rooms" and in the wider spaces of the community beyond the schools. Freewheel, as a regional TIE Company is very conscious of the need to explore, with kids, this social interaction. I stress regional TIE companies because while our work embraces the great metropolitan space it is easier to perceive this rather subjective thing called "community".

During the last couple of years several TIE companies have become aware of the need to expand their work with kids beyond the schools and to work on a broader context. A successful regional theatre company is now aware of the TIE aim or to have begun life as a TIE company and then expanded from that core.

Freewheel has been working in Newcastle for nearly three years. The first phase of the company's work has come to an end and now the new company is exploring on a broader basis the role of TIE in a regional community.

The first phase ended after a trilogy on Union playmen was created and presented to secondary students in the region. The poems had a strong regional and political bias but their effectiveness seemed to be limited. The kids did not see beyond their immediate school context. They were on the conveyor belt and it was extremely difficult for them to accept an idea of what life might be like when the conveyor belt stopped and they were thrust into a new work situation. Although interpretation will continue to expand, what in the Hunter region this programme did not prove to be as effective as had been hoped.

Like the work community an extended classroom. Many regional theatre companies with a TIE aim is to become a true reference to us as it then a more communicative clearly with its audience. It must explore the language of theatre as widely as possible in order to create

the right synthesized theatrical style.

This year Freewheel has explored several different styles with the two programmes and workshops conducted. We made strong new contacts with the Personal Development area of the schools curriculum, with a programme written by Peter Mithrasen called *The Right Thing To Do*. Its subject was teenage pregnancy and the piece explored the possible alternatives available for two adolescents in such a situation. In this technique of presentation the story was told simply but directly in many short scenes, some serious, and some comic. Some changes were agreed to by the audience, the three actors changed characters in full view, nothing was hidden. This programme had a great impact on a personal level with all students who saw it because of the content and also because of its simple but direct theatrical style. Follow up discussions were always held after each performance and discussions were never superficial and unbridled but serious and direct.

All the time we are working with kids who have come with a very theatrical performance before in their lives. This can be very refreshing in with a situation the theatrical style tends to be simple but engaging because that first impression are absolutely real. Freewheel feels now proud again this year in Newcastle to work our second programme *Quest*. It was created to serve as an introduction to theatre for

lower secondary and eight primary kids in the region. Its subject is a community-drama and it is a fast action, fast-paced drama about comedy with lots of slapstick and both serious and comical characters. It is a piece of social theatre. It is not a problem piece, but an enjoyable introduction to the language of theatre. We have also found that it is a great family show. Mothers and their boys sit just as much as the kids and so it has become an excellent piece of community theatre, reaching out to several groups in the community.

Community also implies mobility, which is an essential element of regional companies. They must be able to move to the places where people live, work and enjoy themselves. In a regional company it is to become a voice in its region it must be prepared to travel to its audience in the community and to involve them in its activities. Freewheel is committed to doing theatre for kids about kids with kids in the Hunter Region. It is also committed to expanding the concept of community theatre in the region to create theatre for adults as well as kids.

Newcastle, like at the heart of the Hunter region. To a large extent it is a dangerously poor, most Australians, depend on its industrial production. In such a situation an important TIE company can become an important and essential part of the Newcastle community. The company can become a voice within the community exploring and expressing the social, cultural symbols of that community. The Hunter region is rich in these things. There are two strong social contrasts within the Hunter region, black industrial ghetto close to affluent rural areas. This contrast is reflected in the Freewheel company colours, green and black.

Freewheel is now beginning to lay the area of local history to drag away the top soil and expose the worn underneath. This is an essential activity for any regional theatre company. In this way, a community can celebrate its past, its patterns and set about changing the present and the future. Newcastle, as with other large industrial cities, may rarely use a past or celebratory image of itself but tends to see itself as industrial and productive terms. This needs to be changed. Our theatrical language must be used to explore methods of change. We need to explore the past as we can rediscover our community and ourselves.





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Three Mozarts, Tchaikovsky and George's opera debut

Neither of the Australian Opera's programmes in the month under review was anything like an unqualified success, particularly at opening night, were it to be proved to pick my two most satisfying evenings at the opera during July. I would have little hesitation in choosing two fairly level productions — a Victorian setting of a little-known Mozart opera, and a South Australian staging of Donizetti's *The Elbow of Love*.

This may seem perverse, but I think it is not by itself, none of the four works is the sort of masterpiece one could conveniently scribble up, draw nights in a week at the last (one doesn't really scribble using *Der Rosenkavalier* as Figure or ...), and I quote a few of the acknowledged lions of opera literature.

Mozart's *Adamo* was the first AO premiere of the month, is long-winded and inclined to be snappy. Tchaikovsky's *Ghosts of Spades*, the other untheatrical fine piece of blood and guts heard on stage, indicates in the grand Russian romantic manner. But it can only succeed as theatre given that yet another director, glorious singing and meticulously controlled orchestral playing, that understands its untheatrical nature without neglecting the theatrical appeal of its lighter moments: a thoroughly happy, moment.

Unfortunately, each of the national company's productions of the month underreviewed the effectiveness of the work involved emphasised the defects rather than highlighting the strengths. It is inevitable, too, to compare the two major Mozart productions of the month — the AO *Adamo* and the Victoria State Opera's evaluation of *Le Clemenza di Tito*.

Perhaps the gravest inherent limitations involved in seeing *Adamo* and *Le Clemenza di Tito* lie on the one hand in the less shadowing of presence in some and on the other in the notion of past greatness, but this is an aficionado's game which is played as well or better in the context of one's own score as it is in the theatre. There is little or no point in going to the opera in the theatre merely to listen.

In the pure listening department of course, one would hardly expect to hear the glorious central female trio ascribed by the national company for this year's run of *Adamo* — Penelope, Joan Sutherland died in 1980, particularly in her spectacular vocal line — although I found her marginally less effective than usually than Dorothy Margay, who created the role for the VSO last year. Margaret Gillies was usually dazzling as Cleopatra, though a good deal less effective than Gloria Wall, who sang well and acted capably in Melbourne and

had the advantage of being the prize we to play the role dramatically. But for me the all-round personal highlight of the AO *Adamo* was Leonie Mitchell's like, marvellously sang and judiciously acted.

It was in the unexpected casting of the title role that this year's *Adamo* fell down most seriously — far from Sutherland simply does not have the right sort of voice and all her other strengths cannot make for that. When Sutherland succumbed to a throat ailment as well as was her alternative singer Dagilina, proved he could get a good deal closer to the mark — at least vocally but he failed at any stage to convince dramatically. Why Ronald Dowd, who sang the role magnificently for the VSO in last year's program, and acted a much stronger authority, was passed over when the AO was casting this *Adamo* I cannot comprehend. On why the price which seems something, dramatically when performed in English last year, was heeled back into the original Italian this year raised in the amateur detriment of all audience comprehension and so on, of course, of dramatic value.

It was of course Richard Dwell the musical director as well who was probably responsible for the bulk of this year's most pretentious production team (initially Booth and John Sandford) even managed to escape just about all the time, the artistic judgments of opera since. If there was a legitimate case for the AO to adopt the VSO *Adamo* after its original success, as I fully agree there was, then the case surely is even stronger for a repeat performance with this effort. It was simple, usually, but merely got unconvincingly effective — with Greek statues, objects, themes and every platform, rising on and off from the stage in accord to the flow of the dramatic action was never compromised.

There were more asking Ross in this VSO effort than in the *Adamo*, but even so it was an atmospheric effect. The unconvincingly

magnificent individual triumph of the night with Laura Jane Sutherland the above noted vocally with apparent ease and surprised me, in my view, with her success at male impersonation, aided by superbly flowing passages in the better-dramatised and then-cropped hour.

Finally, she was rivaled only by Margaret Maggiera's *Vivida*, which by and large rose to the enormous challenge of the part but was far from impeccable. In the supporting female roles, Isabel Maile Diamond and Helen Neylans (Sutherland) were adequate rather than outstanding. Gerald English turned in a stupendous dramatic performance as the Emperor Titus, but all the goodwill in the world could not make one overlook completely the unreality of his character trait for the lyricism as times required of Titus.

The *Messenger of Figure* that undeniable masterpiece was among the cluster of Mozart's operatic gems that includes *The Magic Flute*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutti* and *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, was sung bravely but not very effectively in Canberra during the month under review. Figure is a period comedy where style is of the utmost importance: decorated of style, it quickly degenerates into mere burlesque.

The Canberra Figure would not have seemed anything like as unsatisfactory had it not surfaced so long — eight years, to be precise — after the event in a climate dominated by the Australian Opera's Figure of 1971, marked almost without any change during a vast number of performances. In particular, Ronald Macgregor has never made the title role as he makes it his own, and John Pugh has likewise made the Count his own in the Canberra context. Colin Davis turned in a very creditable Figure and — in particular — Margaret Sem was a very fine Countess and Helen Corvetti perfectly acceptable Sarastro.

But beyond these things went wrong, sometimes quite severely. Ross (Gawling's Count) was, by too much the dirty old man, for comfort. Mary Phil's Cleopatra was vulgar rather than funny, convincing and larger than life where the whole point of Cleopatra is that he is almost comically embarrassed by all his wit, trying to be less — rather than more — convincing.

Such unconvincing links can of course be largely excused by inexperience, but Sem, experienced director could have demanded more. If not all of them, Rosalind Huby's production for Canberra Opera was only failed to connect them, but offered such untheatrical social politics in Sutherland singing side by side with the Countess on the same scene — an incredible



Gregory Dempsie (*Adamo*) and Ronald Maggiera (*The Countess* in the AO's *The Queen of Spades*). Photo: Brian Goss

tenets of respect for just about any nineteenth-century lady and her servant, no matter what the time and place. Such faults were all the more disappointing because of the strengths of the *Queen of Spades* in other areas — in particular the marvellous design work of James Robertson (lord and Allan Lane costumes), and the fine individual performances sung out above.

The aesthetics of the new Australian Opera production of Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades* which first saw the light of day during the month under review, were just about impeccable — directed as it was by a world renowned interpreter of one of its leading characters, the aged Countess whose knowledge of the secret of the three cards which will win the game, torques causes all the melodrama and morose which dominate the piece.

There were a number of very good things about this production by Rogan Rees, to design, by her artist husband, Arda Rees — but ironically perhaps not so much in their work as a production team, which was seldom more than adequate and sometimes not even that. Indeed the greatest flaw in this *Queen of Spades* was its stage sets — not so much because of their appearance, though much was made in some quarters at the early price of the production (two curved stair-cases which dominated most of the scenes visually, in because their cumbersome measured long paces between scenes).

The three acts of *Queen of Spades* are subdivided into no fewer than seven scenes, so of course few scene changes need be made while the audience sat in its seats and judged its makers. Speed might matter less were *The Queen of Spades* a piece where dramatic scenes don't matter, but it not. If ever an opera called for scene changes at the twinkling of an eye, it is this one. And this particular sort of bulky, old-fashioned production simply cannot do that.

Which is not to deny it had its good points, the marvellously evocative scene lighting a

roughly selected Countess and the three fatal cards — three, seven, ace — which run through the work like an idea fix, through which some of the action was moved heightening the melodramatic impact of the piece by obscuring the mechanics of the visual effects. Act II Scene 2, scene piece of the opera, the scene in which the Countess dies of fright when Hermann throws her with a pistol while trying in vain to make her reveal the secret of the three winning cards. The general atmosphere of Act III Scene 2, by the banks of the Neva River where Lisa finally drowns herself after being spurned by the cruel Hermann, had been on the self destruction that must result from his attempt to use the secret finally revealed to him by the ghost of the Countess, though Dr. What's Tardis somehow kept on stage for this scene and dominated there unconsciously throughout the scene.

Much of Rees's production was straight forward and sensible, though there were two possible lapses — particularly in the treatment of the Countess's ghost which in both its materialisations during Act III was so far upstage and so badly lit as to have little visual impact at all.

Some opera goers may have felt that Gaspary Demany's Hermann was unduly overdrawn. I found it perfectly in keeping with the sensitive heart beneath sort of work *The Queen of Spades* in. He was quite obviously highly nervous from the start and so on the task of learning the Countess' secret the very moment it was revealed she had one. His kindly, almost servile meekness was masterfully interspersed with just enough brief outbursts of such anger to make it credible that he could continue so to be tolerated as part of the real stage world rather than regarded outright as a thorough-going nut case. But the ideal Hermann ought to display a degree more forced bewitch of their own kind. Demany could manage.

Marilyn Richardson was a pleasing Lisa if not a memorable one, one missing that unbreakable personal radiance which characterises all her

performances, though a few of her top notes displayed a harsh edge which is uncharacteristic of her singing. John Frazer was a splendid Lurky and special moments must be made of the marvellous Paganini of Paula Pagan from her whirling start in Act I Scene 2 (French to English to thoroughly authentic sounding Russian) to her fine Diaphana in the passepelle in Act II Scene 1.

Rosina Ruscacci's Countess was excellent, in itself, but it was perhaps scarcely original by itself, but it was, later in the season, she did a few performances herself. It was easy to see why she has such a reputation for this part, her fierce demeanor in the opening scene, the visual display of terror in her death scene were exemplary like role is, of course, far more an acting than a singing one.

Some persons of this production no doubt felt the wisdom of the rather late premiere in Act II Scene 1 was a mistake when there were cuts elsewhere in the opera. I found it thoroughly justifiable both for its dramatic, if perhaps on Tchaikovsky's mind, as well as for the fact that its action occurs at least in some extent the dilemma of Lisa in the opera proper, both as she is between first love for Hermann and the melodramatic appeal of wealth and immortality as expressed by her bewitched, Prince Vladimir — played admirably by Gregory Vornach.

The themes and objectives were both in good form, though there were a number of occasions when I felt conductor Richard Demany deprived the music of a measure of the richness forerough to have.

Demany's *Queen of Spades* was given a fair airing in Adelaide during the period under review by the State Opera of South Australia in a production which marked the local debut of Colin George as an operadirector.

And a marvellously important detail it was — the first studio production I've ever seen of a piece which all too often comes across as three bits and bobbles. Hugh Coleman's design, helped and of course the ever reliable presence of Myer Friedman at the conducting helm, but finally it was George's sight for the way he moulded a fine ensemble performance from the principals at his disposal.

The personal triumph of this *Queen of Spades* was Thomas Edwards Norcross — very nicely sung as always, which will be no surprise to those familiar with his previous work, but superbly acted where acting has not been one of Edwards' notably strong points in my previous experience. Carolyn Vaughan (Allan) Roger Howell (Referred) and James Christensen (Dr. Detschmann) all sang in excellent style for which at least a fair slice of the credit must be given to Friedman, to George.

His release as a drama director have been on display in Australia since he came here in 1975, but this was his first opera production in that country. It should certainly not be his last, other opera companies please note.

James Christensen (Detschmann) and Thomas Edwards Norcross in the State Opera of SA's *The Queen of Spades*.



Comparisons from Adelaide

Comparisons are, of course, odious, but often inevitable. Particularly in Adelaide at the moment, where the dance and theatre intelligences are comparing notes on Graham Murphy's *Poppa* (recently presented by the Dance Company of New South Wales at the Playhouse) and the Napier Trifidion Taylor collaboration, *Whiskers*, which recently completed a season across town in the Open Theatre for the AISF. And in further complex matters, we have been oriented to Stars of the World Ballet and the Australian Ballet at roughly the same time, but these examples of traditional work only serve to highlight the two more daring, youthful companies and their controversial, innovative works.

Consider the similarities: the country's two most renowned modern dance companies presenting full length pieces devised by two up-and-coming (or now I suppose, up and arrived) theatrical intellectuals, both claiming to be theoretical experiments encompassing dance, and proving this by their use of puppets, props, FX, and all manner of visual devices. But, given these similarities, the differences are even more remarkable. *Poppa* the first full-length modern ballet to be staged in Australia, was eagerly awaited in Adelaide for ten long years, during which time Trifid and Taylor sat more or less by accident, agreed to work together, conceived *Whiskers* wrote, rehearsed, rehearsed, danced, workshoped, choreographed, rehearsed and revised for all they were worth, and presented the second full length modern ballet just before the first one got here.

The critics approached *Poppa* cautiously, with scarcely a bad word, but qualifying their praise to the fine ensemble work, lightning of the choreography (and Spiller, too) and indulging in much story retelling (nervous when the programme notes are so comprehensive). For what it's worth, both *Poppa* and *Whiskers* received rousing reviews on opening night, but whereas *Whiskers* took on an optimal note revealing the destructiveness of Huxford and then demands an emphatic response from its audience, *Poppa* leaves us to meditate on a visually beautiful almost static drama and a standing ovation indicates the audience unanimously felt they had seen something special.

Interestingly, neither of these two pioneering pieces could in any way be called "Australian". The AISF has produced a number of their vignettes with Australian settings, perhaps our culture is too superficial to yet to grasp a full length movement — or it is simply that dance, the least literal medium, has little to do with nationality.

But the principal difference between the two lies in their very manner: *Whiskers* deals with absolutes, infinities and ultimates — Everyone (stating) is a universal setting. *Poppa* takes it as subject to real persons — French artist Jean Cocteau, just in case anybody doesn't know — and observes the progress of his life and art according to historical fact (and a little speculative marginal probing). With the one, the audience seeks personal relevance by absorbing a mass of imagery and dwelling (the down) to something worth holding on to. With the other, the audience must work to build from the specific example (and the timing variations) to find some sort of truth — or whatever it is that people go into theatres to find. In *Whiskers* Everyone becomes Man (or more correctly, "Person") — despite its male-dominated heterosexuality, in *Poppa*, we see a man become Everyone — or Woman, because not doing the sensitive ballet could never be accused of a woman. Option Two — the specific, as in *Poppa* — is the safer distinction.

A device that one technical reviewer used to assess the more visual forms of theatre is to consciously open and shut the eyes very quickly, and return as often as possible "photos" of the action. Applying this to *Poppa* revealed a series of beautifully composed and balanced formations, but also that the dancers were often stationary creating and unusual movement. For contrast, the same technique applied to *Whiskers* often showed striking images and effects, but caught the dancers in attitudes resembling stills from an old Cecil Kelly movie.

Much has been written of the structural elements and effects. To be honest, however, there are at no way extraordinary given the level of technology the theatre now has at its disposal, but very appropriate devices within the limits.

With two exceptions — one good and one bad. It took me quite a while to realize that the ladies whirling around the dance floor in the Cocteau were not puppets, but no sooner had I grasped that than one of them stood up and walked away by itself. This is magic stuff, and dance has a lot to do with magic. Sadly, the could not be said of the Doctor time-type judges that scurried about like a robot computer in Act Two. In fact, this coincided with the divinely weak section of *Poppa* (the fleeing "ghost spirit" by Douglas, Huxford and Co. were reminiscent of the stereotypical "and searching" scene in the last reel of *Leaves of Grass* as great men faces incoming in to focus and repeating lines from earlier in the story).

The dancers, all of whom demonstrated astounding competence (particularly on the opening night in a strange theatre), benefited from perfect casting. And of course, Graham Murphy, who, apart from some complete costumes, walked rather than danced his way in Cocteau, but always seeing out the part with grace and sensitivity, using his face in a remarkable *abnegation*. And once again containing strongly with *Whiskers* where dancers tended to be bodies first and formations. The range of styles and dramatic effectiveness of Carl Vowle were more than the dancing master.

So much for comments, effects and personnel. What did it say? We cannot all agree what we see as well as gifted people like Jean Cocteau but we can all observe, compare, take notes and use them for reference — in short, be sensitive to what a subtle crowd is. And in my opinion, I suppose this is what theatre is all about. Cocteau would call it poetry.

William Shakespeare has been it, we hope for an early review.



Dance Company's *Poppa*. Photo: Bruce-Glass.

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AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION



FILM AUSTRALIA

Barba and Third World Theatre

The best of this book professes that the theatre is "journey, battle, waste, potlatch, recreation, ghetto, public, conspiracy" It is the excitement of the book that by the end you know what the means and believe it.

Eugenio Barba is an Italian Norwegian, of no formal theatrical training, although he worked as Opde with Grotowski in the early 60's who founded the Odin Theatre in Scandinavia — now established in Helsingfors in Denmark. Odin is the Norse God, among whose many qualities was that "he spoke with such ease and eloquence that all he said seemed true to those who heard him". In the 15 years of theatrical research undertaken by Barba and the Odin, they have become famous throughout Europe and the Third World for their enquiring seminars and writings of what Barba calls the "Third Theatre", as much as for a series of provocative productions.

With this book it is now hoped that they will become famous in the rest of the world.

Like Grotowski they place great importance on "research" — workshops and solitary behind closed doors which concentrate on both training the actor physically and vocally and on exploring the truth of what he says and does as he is. Barba is a self styled pedagogue, a teacher master who guides his actors towards self discovery and the theatrical ability to convey what is discovered. Like Stanislavski and Grotowski in their different ways, Barba believes that the subjective personal decisions and acceptance of the actor are the basis of theatre. His training is designed to search for a look which will allow those to be identified and conveyed to an audience.

There is a political dimension to this as well. As the editor of the book says, much modern political theatre "transmits politically conditioned preconceptions by pays attention only to what it says, in forgets that more important than what is said is who says it". Barba's actors, having found within themselves that inner witness, or "face of unique feeling" which makes people wish for a better life or a better society, can develop a more trusting, respectful relationship with an audience.

It is a simple gesture of course, especially away from the hostile microclimate of the workshop and the classroom. This is where the journey the audience need the barrier come in. Odin travelled in 1975 to small peasant villages in Scandinavia, in 1976 to Indian villages in the Venezuelan Andes, and in 1978 to the Peruvian Andes. To communicate with completely uneducated audiences was difficult. They wanted to do it without philosophy or symbolism, and without displaying their own

The Floating Islands by Eugenio Barba, artist by Ferdinando Tavanti. Printed by Thomson Reproclaire.



cultural roots and traditions. Their idea of theatre as cultural being began very simply in Southern Italy on their first journey in 1974. They were staying in a small village, and walking in a group to visit a friend. A crowd followed them curiously because they looked slightly odd. Their friend wasn't home, so they sat down in the square and sang. Scandinavian folk songs. To retain the villagers sang Italian folk songs. From then on they developed a way of leading "theatrical" performances, preserving their subjective cultural propensities and recovering performances on the same basis from their "audience". It seems to have worked better than Peter Brook's search for a single "universal" theatrical language in Africa.

The Odin is a theatre of "waste because, like ritual theatre, the objects featured achieve value through the act of being. The trinkets and old coins are as themselves worth nothing. But they come to represent the communication between tribes when they meet.

Like much new theatre the Odin places very little emphasis on history or narrative, explanatory traits. They start from images which "mean" according to the metaphorical resonance they have for the audience. There is a striking photograph on the last page of this book. It shows three figures sitting or crouching on a wide hillside in the Peruvian Andes. A very thin twelve foot high black stick by one with a death's head and arms folded is jutting off left

into the distance. A strongly contorted, equally tall female figure is sitting with hands folded in front of her neck, looking slowly from right to left. In the foreground a white crouched almost figure is squaring on a log, hand on one side, looking at the camera, forward and contemplative. The effect is impressive and very moving, but not immediately comprehensible.

The Floating Islands, which was published in Helsingfors only a couple of months ago, is a collection of essays and interviews by Barba, with introductory essays by Ferdinando Tavanti. It is a very rich and provocative book. These are statements which substantiate for scenes, about all their major performances, and a large section of photographs of the Odin at work, in their workshop and out in the world. It is a book to be ignored only if your spiritual and artistic path.

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL

Theatre Board Grants, 1980:

DANCE, DRAMA, PUPPETRY, MIME
(including youth schools)

For Theatre Board grants contact Arts and Culture for Australia in 1980, and contact your nearest Arts and Culture office.

Basic requirements: to receive any grants an individual or company, partnership or incorporation must be established by written contract.

Limited life: One is ineligible for the grant if, as a result of recent financial problems, one is or has been unable to pay back any of the grant money.

Residential: An individual must be a resident of Australia or have a permanent residence in Australia. A company must have its principal place of business in Australia.

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GUIDE

A.C.T.

ALBERT HALL (07 0349)

Canberra Opera

Opera in the Schools Series

The Wandering Scholar by Gustav Hahn;

Producers, Anne Goodfry/Singh

Cos and Box by Arthur Sullivan, Producer,

John Corrick; James McCusker, Orchestra;

Conductor, Joanne Bequith.

23 to 28 September

AME ARTS CENTRE (06 4305)

Perth/Gallery

After in #Revisited by Lewis Carroll, adapted

by the Company, director, Carol Woodrow

To 3 September

CANBERRA THEATRE (06 7608)

Big Livermore

Second Case — *Glennan, Authority, Baroque*

Class 1 September

Philips/Gemma Company

Management Theatre

4 to 8 September

The Dance Company

Assassins by Gwynne Murphy

12 to 15 September

Barry Humphries

A Night with Dame Edna

24 to 28 September

PLAYHOUSE (06 9448)

Bryan Lawrence/School of Italia

Paraphrase: Polyphonic Devotions

4 to 8 September

Midwest Theatre Company

The Struggle by Harold Pinter

19 to 23 September

RED HOUSE THEATRE WORKSHOP

(07 6891)

Home's Near

The Empty House

Schools at the ACT

THEATRE (06 4212)

Tempo Theatre

Little Mary Sunshine

Director, Ian Howard

5 to 22 September

For entries please contact Margaret White

on 05 4546

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACTORS COMPANY (660 3366)

Programme unfilled — contact theatre for

details

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

(02 4611)

School Tours *Shirley Bell* a children's play for

children and poetry, Hunter and North West

from 24 September

Dance Company *Let's Tell* dances for infants,

primary and secondary, Central West from 17

September

The Invisible world of magic for infants and

primary, Riverina from 14 September

Somewhere a restaurant musical suitable for

infants, primary and secondary, North Coast

and Hunter from September 24.

The Playgroup Rappers, metropolitan area from

24 September

In My Country with Leonard Teale, Central

West from 17 September

Adult Tours *Burinary Circle* written, directed

and starring Brendan Larkin, throughout

September

THE AUSTRALIAN OPERA (02 0308)

Opera Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Simon Boccanegra by Verdi, producer, Michael

Josephson, Adapt by Janacci conductor,

Charles Mackerras, producer, John Copley;

Silence by Strauss, conductor, Bill Reid

professor, Tom Leopold; *Plutarch* by Gilbert

and Sullivan, conductor, Geoffrey Arnold;

professor, John Cox. In repertory throughout

September

COURT HOUSE HOTEL (06 9200)

Orlando/Square, Taylor Square

Final and Grand by Rick Meier and Malcolm

Parfrey, director, Malcolm Parfrey, music,

Sandra Hodgson, with Steven Seitz, Susan

Asquith, Neil Landowen, Curt Arnan and

Darius Norman. Fridays and Saturdays

throughout September

ENSMBLE THEATRE (02 4475)

Chapter Two by Neil Senica, director, Wayne

Gardner, with Sharon Plummer, Len Kesteven,

Suzanne Hooty and Greg Rufford. Until 22

September

FRAMING STRAIN'S BULL N' BUSH

THEATRE RESTAURANT (02 4676)

Phantom for the Memory a musical review from

the turn of the century to today, with Neil

Reynolds, Barbara Wyndon, Garth Meade, Neil

Byrne and Helen Loran, directed by George

Cassidy. Throughout August

GENESIA THEATRE (02 5646)

The Yellow by Agatha Christie, director,

Deanne Allen, with Guyana Mitchell, Patricia

East, Anthony Hays and Paul Harris. Through

out September

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (02 3411)

Amor the musical, director, George Harris,

with Hays Gardner, Jill Perryman, Natalie

Hays, Rick Hanson. Anne Gray and Karen

Kahan. Throughout September

HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE COMPANY

(06 1204)

Cross Playhouse, Newcastle

Flamenco by Roger Hall, director, Terence

Clarke. September/October

KIRRIHILL PUB THEATRE (02 1412)

Kirrihill Hotel, Maitland/Point

The Pompey Show written and directed by

Perry Quance, with Patrick Ward and Laura

Gale. 21 days into September

LES COURTES PRESENTATIONS (02 3676)

White Jackson (unfilled) book review. Through

infants, primary and secondary schools on South

Coast. 19-23 September

MARIAN STREET THEATRE (06 1268)

The Chamber by Philip Mackin, director, Peter

Whitlock with Tom McCarthy, Ben Graham,

John Allen, Russell Newman, Elaine Lee,

Russell Spence, Max Gibson and Neil

Lakeland. Until 3 September

The Devil's Road by Emlyn Williams, director,

Alastair Duncan. Commences 7 September

MARIONETTE THEATRE OF AUSTRALIA

(02 1208)

Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Richard Bradshaw and his Shadow Puppets,

from 17 August to 3 September

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

(02 4212)

Lost to the Devil written and directed by Stanley

Watts, with Ron Hickrick, Alan Wilson and

Karen Johnson. Throughout September

MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (02 1283)

After About a new review by John McKellar and

Ron Foster, director, Bill Orr with Ron Foster.

Throughout September

NEW THEATRE (02 1488)

Henry by Terence Rattigan, director,

Alan Tanner, with Richard Smith, Rob Thomas,

Alan Pollack, David Kordaka, Toby Pringle

and Bill Hopes. Throughout September

NIMROD THEATRE (06 9363)

Twisting North by David Williamson, director,

John Bell, with Frank Wilson, Jonathan Hays,

Carol Rye, Graham Rame, Helen Scott,

Deborah Kennedy and John Hamilton. Until 9

September

Domination

Opus Down at the Bottom of the World by

David Allen, director, Neil Arnold. Until 2

September

NOW THEATRE OF THE DEAF (02 1280)

School tours throughout metropolitan area. *My*

Home is Your Garage for the primary schools

and *Acoustic Speak* for the secondary schools

and *Acoustic Speak* for the secondary schools

both directed by Ian Wilson,

with Paul Collins, Margaret Davis, David

London, Colin Allen and Bryan Jones

PLAYERS THEATRE COMPANY (08 7110)

Book Pavilion Theatre

The Tempest of the Show by William

Shakespeare, director, Graham Dwyer, with

Paul Mason, Eddie McDonald, Ron Sharp and

Doreen Parker. Into September

289 PLAYHOUSE (02 4894)

Play It Again Sam by Woody Allen, director,

John Hewitt, with the 289 Players. Into

September

School, along along children's musical by

Brian Warren with 289 Players, director John

Hewitt. Friday, Saturday and Sunday through

out September

Q THEATRE (06 7111-7112)

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar

Wilde. At Parrish and September 16,

Parrishville 19-23 September and Bankstown 26

29 September

RECENT THEATRE (02 6957)

Power Play by J M Burt, a Class Drama pro-

duction. Until September

RIVERINA THEATRE COMPANY

(06 211952)

The Boy Magpie Show by Alan Bates and *The*

Lon Derry Show by Jack Hibbard. In Waggon and

on tour throughout September

ROCKS PLAYERS (02 4748/02 1234)

The Rockable Role of Arthur (2) by Gerald

Bruce, director, Anthony Barclay. In repertory

with *John* an adaptation of Whitlatch's *John*

Spirit and *Penelope* Ben, director, Alan

Kingsford Smith, Until 29 September

SEYMOUR CENTRE 695 4551

Yash Tandan
Two Dances Each Blue with Rubylin Aulster
 13-26 September

SHOPIPING THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE 631 1944

Five drama workshops on *East and West* (10-29) including playwriting, mime, dance, sculpture, puppets, design, audio and video

SPEAKEASY THEATRE RESTAURANT

643 1442
 Kevin 20 director, Jim Faldwin, with Kate Farnsworth, Michael Arfano and Donald McDonald Throughout September

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY 639 8322

Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House
Long Day's Journey into Night by Eugene O'Neill, director, Robert Lewis, with Patricia Connolly, Kevin Miles, Shamus O'Driscoll, Neil Phipps and David White From 14 September

THEATRE ROYAL 621-8111

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo
 Until 14 September
Gle Game by D. L. Cabaret, director Peter Williams, with Ruth Crockett & Ben Hadfield
 From 14 September

For cinema contact: Carol Long on 337 1269

QUEENSLAND

ARTS THEATRE 19 2144

Someone Waiting by Evelyn Williams, director, Jonathan Debenham To 8 September
Caroline by Jill Stanner, director, Jennifer Rutherford 25 September-4 October

LA ROUTE 36 1022

After Class a work spectacle by Ron Finney based on Harold Pinter, musical director, David Watson To 8 September

POPULAR THEATRE TROUPE

Ring 26 1740 for current programme details

QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL 321-5808

White ribe 845, Book starring Lesnoid Trade, at Twelfth Night Theatre To 8 September
 Playgroup Group, Puppet Company at the Radio West End 24 September-3 October
First Contact Two Characters to 8 September

QUEENSLAND OPERA COMPANY

121 7166 at Gold Theatre (21 3171)
The Makin' Progress to 19 September, producer, Michael Roschinsky designer, Peter Cooke, Qld Theatre Orchestra conductor, Graeme Fyall, with Gregory Campbell, Lure Nipper, Paul Nott, Deborah Davis, Robert Harrington, Doreen White, John Warner, Gloria Blair 26-29 September

QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY

621 3171
Death Trap by Iris Levin, director, John Krammer designer, Pamela Bailey, with Fay Adams, Robert Stephens, Tony Scriven To 8 September
A Midsummer Night's Dream by Shakespeare, director, Alan Edwards, designer, Peter Cooke, opens at Artson Park 29 September-4 October

TH COMPANY 52 3510

at La Bait
Golly Dancers, Australian triple bill of plays by Richard Boddiman, John Saraceno and Mel Parris, director, John Milson, designer, Mike Bridgen 19 September-13 October
 Underground Productions *Chorus in Law* by Howard Brontow, director, Jane Adams,

designer, Mike Bridgen 28 September-13 October

TOWNSHOP ARTS THEATRE COLLEGE

131 1309
Offshore in *the Underworld* by Jacques Offenbach, director, Murray Foy, musical director, Peter Korte 12-12 September

Throughout ninety One Australia on 289 3076

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE REPERTORY COMPANY

at the Arts Theatre
The Aspidochelone by Edward Bond, Director, Phyllis Barford

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY

THEATRES
 Works in Progress weekend with 2 new Australian plays *La Mamma Theatre*, *Handmade* 20-21 August 1-2 September

AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE

612 2884
 Touring Asia during September and October
 Jakarta, Singapore, Hong Kong, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Manila

Q THEATRE 21 5725

59 Halifax Street
Dancing for Me by John Packerwell, director, Bill O'Leary
 Wed Sat, 15 Sept-13 Oct

STATE THEATRE 61 6161

at the Opera House Theatre
Over the Moon by Nicholas Maser, Director, Anthony Bach, Designer, John Brooking, Musical Director, Wray Franklin
 7 Sept 1,3,5,7,10,12,14,15 Sept

STATE THEATRE COMPANY 61 5151

at the Playhouse
Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare, Director, Neil Davidge 13 Aug-14 Sept
Bugsy Great Skier by F. J. Wilford, Director, Kevin Palmer 17 Sept-13 Oct

TROUPE 231 8122

The Red Road, Cnr Angus and Campbell St.
The Distant Winter by Graeme Monro
 1-23 September, Weds Sat

For cinema contact: Edwin Bell on 712 8610

TASMANIA

POLYTHEATRE COMPANY 14 6103

The Playhouse, director, David Gray Touring on Southern 4 Sept, Devonport 13 September
She Sings to Conquer by Goldsmith, director, Don Gray (English) Newca Theatre, Henry Collage, Hobart 19-22 September, Touring to Devonport 14-October

SALAMANCA THEATRE 32 3219

Touring throughout the State with three plays:
The Invisible, *The Biggest Thing That Ever Died* by Ken Kesey
John by Night Trill

Silly Sings, a new play for primary schools by Carol Barry

TASMANIAN PUPPET THEATRE 33-1994

in process

THEATRE ROYAL 64-6166

The Playgroup Group Puppet Company
 18-23 September

For cinema contact: the Editorial Office on 646/657-6478

VICTORIA

ACTORS THEATRE 428-1030

New Adventures of Paddington Bear

ALEXANDER THEATRE 640 2618

Flaminio by Roger Hall with Paul Kane, Terry McDermott, Alice Phillips, Sydney Constant To 8 Sept

Balloon Players' Solstice from 28 September
 Special August/September production for school holidays

ARENA THEATRE 64-9613 or 64-1973

Admission of Women Companies 1 and 2 touring primary schools to grade 3
Aladdin and the Golden Apples, Companies 1 and 2 touring primary schools, grades 4-5
Thelma's (Quest by Stephen Walker, 90/91 Community Activities, Youth Theatre Group, Women's Theatre Group, Saturday Morning Class

ARTS COUNCIL OF VICTORIA 629-4319

Walt Hoppla *Notes from an Old Man's Diary* adapted from Chekhov by Sam Ramsay and Malcolm Robertson
 With the VSO *Twelve Days of a Year*, Children's Opera by Peter Narroby
Sarah's Temple with Wayne Richard Brown

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP

647 7123
 From February
 From Theatre to be announced

Back Theatre, Clones by Jenny Partridge, director, Jack Kering
Mobile Poetry Workshop with Joanna Stone, Rory Harrison and CMTSymbic Tourist

COMEDY THEATRE 661-4993

Paul Diddy presentation, *The Puppet Show* *The Day After the Day* adapted from a story by Thomas Hardy, by Frank Harvey, Director, Frith Searby, designer Kristian Productions
Starring Deborah Kerr, Patricia Kennedy, Andrew McFarlane, Lynette Curran, Gordon Glenwright and Dave Smith Opening 11 Sept

CREATIVE ARTS THEATRE 620-1642

Community based theatre working on schools, libraries and community centres. The team

FLYING TRAPEZE CAFE 11 3771

Trapeze Tapes with Bob Thompson and Nancy Long

GAY NINETIES MUSIC HALL, Opening

Director, Kevin Rouse To and Sat

HOPLA THEATRE FOUNDATION

631 7643
 Playbox
 Uptown: *Small Reverence* in Chicago by David Mamet, director, Gertie Blomfield From 18 August

Everyman Theatre *Collette's Spelling Family*

Admission by Colin Ryan, From 26 September
Overturn, No Men's Land by Harold Pinter, director, Murray Copeland, From 31 August

HER MAJESTY'S 663-2310

The Two Roomers, Susan Barker and Rosam Carter

KOLORIC DANCE COMPANY 678-6416

Ballroom Shopping, Cues 24 September
 Western District Tour 10-12 September

LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT

615 8216
 1st Floor, Season extended till Christmas

LA MAMA 126-4100/347-6819

A new play writing and directed by Valerie Kavan 6-30 September

Guide

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

(044 4808)

Russell Street Theatre

Enol Plover's Great Big Adventure Book for Boys by Bob George, director, Bruce Milne, designer, Tonya McCallum, with Carol Davis, Betty Robbitt, Peter Cameron To 22 September

Albion Theatre

The Bush by R. B. Studdard, director, Peter James, designer, Anne Fraser, with Elizabeth Alexander, Verna Davis, Sandy Gair, Jane Jupp, David Davies, Anthony Hurlbut, Edward Hoyle, John Stanton To 13 September
Tribuna Productions and youth work in progress, also School Theatre Project and Cinema Up

OLD MILL, Goolong (042 3) 1444

Drama Centre of Deakin University Regular Evening Productions

PALATHEATRE (034 0031)

Australian Ballet Company in *Nancy's New Queen*

PILGRIM PUPPET THEATRE (019 4408)

Circus Songs and Songs by Ben Cooper

POLYGLOT PUPPET (019 1512)

Multi-cultural puppet theatre with Mogg the Cat and Friends Touring schools and community centres

PRINCESS THEATRE (062 2911)

George and Andrew Jackson, Tony Chapman, with Yvonne Joyce and Brian Mayfield
Dance Le Rue from early October
Les Ballets Trockadero, all male company, from mid October

TREE AND JOHN'S THEATRE LOUNGE

(042 1742)

Web Tubb and John Newman, Myrtle Roberts, The Kender and Quasi Artists

VICTORIAN STATE OPERA (01 5081)

Semi-Cosmic Concert, Dallas Brooks Hall, August 30
Twice Upon a Time by P. Harnoway, Schools Programme, Music Theatre programme starting October

Major Amateur Companies:

Please contact these theatres in the evening for further details

BASIN THEATRE GROUP 362 0362

CLAYTON THEATRE GROUP 876 1742

HEIDE THEATRE 49 2362

MALVERN THEATRE COMPANY 311 0020

PUMPKIN THEATRE 40 8327

WILLIAMSTOWN LITTLE THEATRE

329 4267

ICE THEATRE 396 8424

For further please contact Les Cartwright on 321 1777

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

HIDE IN THE WALL (01 2401)

Secretary Youth Theatre Workshop performance: *The Last of the Bushes* by the Andrew Book

Pool on the Hill by John Aiken, director, Mike Morris From 13 September

HAYMAN THEATRE, WAIT (09 7026)

The Time Is Not Yet by Louis Esson, director, Celia O'Brien From 13 September

NATIONAL THEATRE (025 1588)

Perthhouse

The Man from Mandibonby by Dorothy Howson, director, Stephen Barry World premiere 30 August to 22 September

THE REGAL (081 1257)

No performances

WA ARTS COUNCIL TOURING PROGRAMME

WA Ballet Company in *Swan*, Ballet Melbourne *La Strada* on tour, Pops Science Children's Circus on tour

For current list, Jane Ambrose on 290 4649

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THESPIAS PRIZE CROSSWORD NO.15

Name

Address

Answers

- Endorse the notion behind the bar (11)
- It seems unusual and unusual (7)
- Scholarship — about a thousand — could become more political (10)
- Give made of various matter, apparently (6)
- "I have shot mine — oh the heavenly hurt my brother" (Mander) (6)
- Wine men found in Lema, Gosh and Tyne (4)
- Debut on quickly, few told (11)
- Make a forecast that the French will desert a president (10)
- Never contacted in a game (4)
- A format in following for film director (5)
- Stily punch accessible only through gateway with a garnish (9)
- Original movement brings out feeling (7)
- Convict past mine (7)
- Sassy Lode in delirious seductress (11)

Down:

- Turns for a knowing, small fan the coach? (7,4)
- Short sustenance of horror about a husband (3)
- A horse in the shade has a good carrying capacity (7)
- Continuity on which walking routine to make a sport (17)
- Lizard in a profused a hybrid but was copied (6)
- Good 4 mile swimmer, not really with numbers (12)
- Many argued, too charged (17)
- But a name not in every two years (8)
- This bird is a soft sweetheart (6)
- Discussions start with point in the hole (8)
- Power of gold 1 story in the capture (7)
- True warning companions (6)
- Forest meet in different place (8)



The first correct entry drawn on September 25th will receive one year's free subscription to TA

Last month's answers

The winner of last month's Crossword was Ms Sarah Turner, Wa